



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE CURSE OF MUNGLI.

By HERBERT C. MACILWAINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE November rains were late, and the earth was showing its naked ribs along the creek-frontages of the tidy Crannoch cattle-run that lay, with its six hundred miles of sound cattle-country, snugly packed away about the headwaters of the Tracy River. Donald McCunn, hard-bitten pioneer of the older days, now man of substance, had been well used this many a year to see his station by mid-November knee-deep in lush pasture and glowing within its boundaries like an emerald. Crannoch was far enough to the west of Queens-land to grow pasture of the fattening qualities of Mitchell grass, or of maize itself for the matter of that, and yet near enough to the sea to be saved as a general thing from the full horrors of drought. Added to this, the craggy hills that flanked its eastern end served the old squatter as guardian angels. They were his mighty rain-gatherers; for when, in the spring, the thundering cloud-battalions were marshalled in from the westward, and in late summer when the ocean sent its yearly message of mercy from the east, then always the gray old hills that sentinelled Crannoch would demand their toll, and get it in the shape of rain for the old Scotsman's run. 'As green as the paddocks of Crannoch' came to be a local saw—for once a true one.

Donald McCunn, however, not altogether singular among his race perhaps, was more of an expert in matters theological than meteorological; and he gave thanks for Heaven's largesse after his own bent. He was given to quoting, with a species of aggressive humility peculiarly his own, selected Bible texts by way of demonstrating to less favoured squatters on suitable occasions that their drought-bitten paddocks and his green ones were manifestly the handiwork of that special Providence that makes a note of the sternly pure

of heart in this wicked world, and dispenses its mercies accordingly. Thus, amongst his easy-going neighbours, McCunn—dour, steadfast, solvent, and sanctimonious—was hardly looked upon in the light of a boon-companion.

And now Providence appeared to have broken faith with the master of Crannoch, and, unmindful of the past, had turned a hard, reproving eye upon it. There was none of your Job-like humility about McCunn. How should there be about a man whose fathers in the good old days had rummaged the Scriptures from end to end for congenial guiding principles in the shape of flinty and fiery texts that should bite, turn and turn about with their own stout claymores, the hearts and heads of unbelieving enemies?

No: Donald McCunn sat by his bare table of cypress-pine in righteous bitterness against the world and the elements that encompassed it, and was persuaded that both and all had betrayed him. The open door at his back, that framed a patch of desolation, made up of burning sand-ridge and naked glistening river gums, and the doorway in front of him, that led to the kitchen across the footworn gangway, both gaped like thirsty mouths in the thrice-parched, blistering air, and not the faintest flutter of a draught stirred between them. Now and then a high-hung, sulky cloud, more like a wreath of smoke than of water-born moisture, would drift across the sun, and, as it passed, the iron on the roof would creep and shudder in the lowered temperature as if a flight of unholy things—drought-demons, maybe—were scampering across the metal with set claws; then the cloud would pass and the demons would make a return-charge. These mocking signs had trailed across the blazing heavens in weird procession throughout the last month, and yet rain seemed farther off than ever.

McCunn's elbows were planted firmly upon the table, and he held two tanned and knotted fists planted against his high cheek-bones; the sweat welled out upon him, filling the sharp furrows that patterned his forehead, rayed the corners of his stone-gray eyes, and drew two deep, hard lines of obstinacy at either end of the straight-drawn, thin-lipped mouth. A fringe of grizzled beard and a hood of erect and defiant hair framed the whole stern face. A well-thumbed Bible was at his right elbow; beneath his eyes lay a map of Crannoch and its surrounding runs; a crumpled copy of the local newspaper was on his left. Donald McCunn was in a black and bitter mood. A drop of dusty sweat fell with a distinct smack from the stubby beard upon the map, and lighted on the central block of the station that neighboured Crannoch on the east. He angrily smeared the offending moisture with a big rough finger over a couple of hundred miles of country, and broke his silence, staring out vindictively across the kitchen gangway.

'You might have thocht that a God-fear-r-ring, sober man 'ud had enough to thole in seeing his cattle, the pride of his life and his years, dying for the want of nourishment, Hannah?'

A girl who lay in a cane chair behind the squatter—a woman rather, formed, as to face, body, and limbs, on stately and yet homely lines—raised her eyes from a book upon her knees and looked somewhat indifferently at her father's back, stretching both arms above her. She knit her large hands behind her head and leaned it back against them without answering.

The squatter's eyes grew harder, and he kept them accusingly on the staring sunshine without. 'You dinna answer, Hannah! Ah! more and m-o-o-re I've obsairved of late that your father's troubles are little—ay, little, and growing noticeably less—to you.' There was an increasing skirl in his voice, as though a grievance and a pretext for anger were entirely seasonable to his humour.

The tall girl said, in a motherly contralto tuned by nature to carry comfort where comfort was possible, and as if a minor matter had been opened up for discussion: 'The rain'll come, father, for sure. And what's the fresh trouble?'

'The rain—hech! And lo! a prophet has come forth.' He spoke acridly, then banged the crumpled newspaper noisily with his open hand. 'And look how ye prove my worrds to me. Hev ye forgotten so soon what I read to ye out of here a shortt' hour ago?' Is there not trouble full measure in that?'

'Eh?' she answered, still placidly; 'that a successor to that poor Mr Baynton is coming to work Mungi? Is it troubled you are, father, that your neighbours are coming by their own again?'

Mungi was the neighbouring run on the plan of which the squatter's sweat-drop had fallen, giving words to his wrath.

'Their own, their own!' he shouted, still not turning, and he shook his fist at the blinding sunlight outside; 'theirs—that should be mine! Have I not told you, girl, for years, that, morally and speeritually, before the Lorrd, I was robbed of that block o' lan? And the dry passion of earth-hunger—the bloodless lust as deep as the craving for gold or drink—seowled beneath his bushy black eyebrows as he spoke.

The girl, still leaning her head against the interwoven fingers, looked with a broad pity, not unmixed with something of large scornfulness in her big gray eyes, at her father's moist shirt and erect thatch of grizzled hair, and said nothing.

'Ay,' he went on, with gathering bitterness, 'the land that I wanted to complete the Crannoch run was taken up by stealth; it was like the work of a thief in the dead of night. And didna the Lorrd set the seal of His disapproval on the home at Mungi there from the day of its building? Didna the pleuro ravage his cattle; and from the day his wife died in childbirth—the cane chair creaked as the girl moved uneasily in it, but the old man went on relentlessly—from that day was there an hour's happiness for Baynton when the drink laid hold of him till they found him lying across his own doorstep with his'—

'Father!' She had risen and was standing behind him with a long, sunburned hand on each of his shoulders.

He went on without heeding her. 'E-e-e-h, since yon time two-an'-twenty year syne, that I hurried to the Lands Office in Brisbane and found he had been before me, and taken up the Mungi blocks, and since I stood and—Na, na!—he raised a shaking hand—'I didna curse him; but I called on God to gi'e the both of us just measure according to our desairts before Him. I did that. And He judged between us, and sent a blight upon that house, so that not one stone'—He broke off with a dry chuckle, remembering, apparently, that the scriptural imagery hardly applied to a house built of wooden slabs. His laugh was the laugh of a man who has known vengeance and is at work to cheat himself into the belief that the taste of it is sweet and not like ashes in the mouth.

The girl's hands had fallen to her side. 'Father,' she said, as if unwillingly, 'I—where is the humility that you urge upon other folk?'

'Humelity!' he roared; but still he did not turn to face her. 'You dare to, you, you'—and he closed his teeth with a snap. 'Humelity,' he expounded, with a kind of savage mildness, 'is for them that feel the weight of the Lorrd's hand upon them. But to them that sairve Him all their days it is permitted to rejoice when they perceive that it is His pleasure to humble their enemies in the dust before them.'

Apparently the humorous aspect of this jumbling together of greed with creed on the part of the

old man was not entirely lost upon the girl, for the wryness that it brought to her face was tempered by a patient smile. Again she remained silent.

M'Cunn began to fold up his map violently, waxing the bitterer for want of open opposition. 'Mind me, Hannah, there's a blight upon that house—the curse that goes yit ill-gotten goods. It killed the wife and child, and blasted the herro, and drave Baynton to shed his ain blood upon his ain doorstep. An' lay this to your heart'—he squeezed a knotted fist on the folded map—'who-soever comes to Mungi, they're strangers to us, an' us to them, for the wrath of Almighty God is upon them, and we dinna want the canker to spread among us here.'

This quaint exposition of the economic aspect of spiritual matters again made Hannah mix tolerance with her frown.

'You hear?' M'Cunn said fiercely, spinning round in his seat at last, and facing her as she stood back from and above him, with her arms folded beneath the rounded softness of her breast.

Under her steady look the father wilted oddly; it was easy to see now why he had checked his impulse to turn upon her before. Donald M'Cunn in his soul feared the daughter that stood above him like a bush-goddess. The sting was gone from his anger suddenly, leaving it merely futile; and though he sought with extra vehemence to enforce his command by repeating it many times and rapping noisily on the table with his great knuckles, one could see that it rested solely with the tall girl as to whether she heeded him or not.

She said steadily: 'I hear you, father—I hear you; and I'll heed you to the letter'—she paused—'while I live beneath your roof.'

He brightened, almost humbly, as if he were a

grateful suppliant instead of the hectoring parent of a moment ago. 'Eh, there now,' he fawned, 'the good lassie!'

'You heard my words, father?'

'Ay, ay, I heard you.'

'While I eat your bread'—

'Ay, ay,' he said blankly; he fingered senilely at his lean jaws, looking up furtively; and it was plain to see that strife was going on within him between tenderness and wrath. A hand he had raised towards her paused midway. The contest in M'Cunn ended in a compromise; he withdrew the hand and scratched the stubble on his cheek raspingly with a forefinger. 'Mebbe you'll see to the dinner, Hannah?' he said.

Hannah went out to the kitchen, showing in her walk the strength of a savage, the free grace of glowing health, and the dignity of one of Nature's appointed queens. The old squatter, struck with a rare fit of abstraction, watched the girl go out, and sat looking long at the empty doorway; his straight lips fell apart, and the graven lines about his mouth took on a kindlier look, as though the spring that braced his jaws together had been suddenly eased. But he soon came to himself with a start, said 'Hoots,' shut his mouth as if the spring had been restored to its office, and scowled about him, uttering a deep, long-drawn 'H—m, h—m!' then rose to his feet and made to hurry from the room. But he stopped before the cane chair, where the cushion still showed the faint mould of Hannah's body, and where her book was lying open and face downwards. He stooped to peer suspiciously at the title, and, looking up to the iron roof and shaking both hands above his head like a prophet of woe, he repeated it in a half-whisper: '*Their Father's Sins.*'

THE GOLDEN KOOTENAYS IN 1898.



WHEN the Klondike gold-fever spread to the Old Country, the writer of this article was amongst the earliest upon whom the epidemic laid hold. The news of the great 'strikes' in the far North-west was sufficient to once more arouse to action the instincts of the old prospector, then living quietly in England, after many years spent upon Australian gold-fields.

In less than a fortnight the writer was crossing the Atlantic, *en route* for the new Eldorado. Coming across Canada, upon the Canadian Pacific Railway, were many mining men; and, as the result of conversations held during the long journey westward, the writer decided to winter in the Kootenays, and to continue the journey to Klondike in the spring.

The geographical position of the Yukon country is by this time well known to most people; but there are many who will not have a like knowledge of the locality of the 'Golden Kootenays.' In endeavouring to enlighten the reader upon this point, and also to bring into more deserving prominence the resources and wealth of this little-known portion of the Dominion, the writer is actuated by the desire to 'switch off,' if possible, some of the human current which is flowing Klondike-wards into what will probably prove a far more profitable channel, and one in which fewer obstacles will be encountered.

Scattered over the Kootenays are many prosperous mining towns and camps, the principal of which is Rossland, in the Trail Creek mining division of Western Kootenay. We will confine our attention chiefly to this dis-

trict, as it is here that some of the most remarkable developments have been, and are, taking place.

Little more than three years ago the present site of Rossland was covered with forest, the haunt of the puma and the bear. Here and there, in the surrounding mountains, were the camps of the mining pioneers, to whose adventurous researches the present prosperity of the district is due.

Rossland is now an incorporated city of 7000 inhabitants, with churches, schools, hospital, banks, electric light, newspapers, &c.; and the energetic and successful development of the rich gold-mines in the surrounding mountains bids fair to make the city one of the most promising in British Columbia.

As the town is situated at an altitude of 3325 feet, the weather in winter is somewhat cold, but on account of the extreme dryness of the atmosphere, little discomfort is felt. The temperature seldom falls many degrees below zero, while in July and August the thermometer often reaches the nineties. There are several feet of snow in the winter, when sleighing takes the place of wheel-traffic; but once the snow becomes packed down and solid, pedestrians feel but little inconvenience. Two lines of railway serpentine their way up the mountain-sides, making Rossland their terminal point. One line runs from the United States (the boundary-line of which country is but a few miles distant), where it has connections with the great American trunk lines to all parts of the States. The other railway is connected with the great Canadian Pacific Railway system, *via* Robson on the Columbia River, reaching Rossland through Trail, a 'smelting' town.

The population of Rossland is principally composed of Americans and Canadians, and one meets but few who actually hail from the United Kingdom. One of the most striking features of the place is the almost entire absence of rowdyism of any kind. In a Western mining town one expects to hear of shooting affrays and mob law; such, however, is not the case in Rossland. In this respect it shows a marked contrast with the American mining towns, where shooting is common and the law lenient.

Immediately surrounding the town are some of the richest gold-mines in the Kootenays, from which in the near future an immense output of gold may be expected. The following figures will give the reader some idea of the great developments which have recently taken place.

During 1897 the total output of the Kootenay mines was 8,136,696 dollars, or considerably more than the entire yield of all the lode-mines of British Columbia for the ten previous years. This yield speaks volumes, when it is considered that most of the mines are as yet only partially developed. Taking the 'Trail Creek' mining division alone, one finds that the output for last year was 150 per cent. more than the pro-

duct of 1896, and 330 per cent. more than that of 1895.

The following figures will serve to show the richness of the gold-bearing ores mined round Rossland.

Taking the famous 'Le Roi' mine alone, we find that, during 1897, 57,437 tons of ore produced gold to the value of 2,125,169 dollars, and copper to the value of 344,622 dollars. This shows a value of 37 dollars per ton in gold and six dollars in copper, or a total of 43 dollars per ton.

During the year 1897, dividends to the value of 425,000 dollars were paid by this company, the shareholders in which are mostly Americans.

Until quite recently the interests held by British investors in the district were comparatively small, but it is encouraging to find that British money is beginning to flow in this direction. The writer has never in any other country witnessed developments which promised such rich and enduring returns for well-directed outlay. The element of chance, which is always more or less a factor in metalliferous mining, seems here to be reduced to a minimum, and the ever-increasing prosperity appears to be built upon a solid and enduring foundation.

The present year will probably witness some of the most remarkable and successful mineral developments the world has ever seen. These mountains and valleys are, day by day, yielding up more and more of their immense riches. It is only the miner or mineralogist who has actually visited the Kootenays who can form an adequate idea of their mineral wealth. Gold, silver, copper, and lead occur here in great fissure-veins, with quartz and iron-pyrites.

Although 'free gold' and 'placer' are found in considerable quantities, yet here in the Kootenays they are mostly found in sulphide combinations; this necessitates smelting, thus creating an industry in which are other promising openings for the capitalist, and in which a large number of people obtain employment.

Some seven miles from Rossland is the town of Trail, situated on the banks of the Columbia River. Here is a large smelter, which is connected by railway with Rossland and other mining centres. Some hundreds of men find employment here at wages ranging from two to five dollars a day. There are several other smelters in the Kootenays, and this industry bids fair to assume large proportions in the near future.

The Klondike gold excitement will greatly assist in drawing attention to this part of British Columbia, and doubtless many of the thousands who will be disappointed in the frozen north will eventually find their way to this district, where they will encounter fewer difficulties and meet with many opportunities for the profitable employment of brain and muscle.

The forests abound with game, and it is no uncommon sight to see deer and bear meat hang-

ing in the butcher's shop. Everywhere are creeks and rivers teeming with fish; in fact, a Winchester rifle and a fishing-rod furnish both good sport and are most useful for replenishing the larder.

There are many openings in the Kootenays for the speculator and the small capitalist; especially are there great possibilities for the poor man, the artisan, or the young fellow who is not too 'big' to take off his coat for three dollars a day. Employment here, as elsewhere, has to be sought; but few would arrive here without enough money in their pockets to live upon whilst seeking work. Competent miners receive from three to three and a half dollars a day, and ordinary unskilled labourers from two to three dollars a day.

If a man lives in his own 'cabin' he can live very well on half a dollar a day, so it is

evident that the careful man can soon save money.

There is little or no demand for clerks or shopmen; but any one able and strong enough to do arduous manual work can soon obtain an opening at rates which will enable him to put by some money. Introductions, unless especially strong, are likely to be of little use; but the new arrival who comes furnished with enough means to look round for employment will find that he can get on very well without them. There are no openings for idlers; but for any one who is not absolutely destitute there are good chances to be met with for the seeking.

In conclusion, the writer may add that his affections are weaned from Klondike, and set upon the great possibilities of the 'Golden Kootenays.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—HOW THREE MEN HELD A TOWN IN TERROR.

IT was towards evening—a dark November evening—that we came near the little town of Biggar. The place lies on a sandy bank raised from the wide moss which extends for miles by the edge of the sluggish stream. It is a black, desolate spot, where whaups and snipe whistle in the back streets, and a lane which begins from the causeway may end in a pool of dark moss-water. But the street is marvellous broad; and there, at the tail of the autumn, is held one of the greatest fairs in the Lowlands of Scotland, whither hawkers and tinkers come in hordes, not to speak of serving-men and serving-lasses who seek hire. For three days the thing goes on, and for racket and babble it is unmatched in the country-side.

We halted before the entrance to the town, on a square of dry ground in the midst of the waterway. I know not how many the gipsies were, but with women and children they were not less in number than ninety or a hundred. They had with them a great quantity of gear of all kinds, and their animals were infinite. Forby their horses and asses, they had dogs and fowls and many tamed birds, which travelled in their company. It is a trait of these strange people that they must ever have something on which to expend their affection; and while the women have their children, the men have their pets. The most grim and quarrelsome tinker will tend some beast or bird, and share with it his last meal.

When the camp was made, the fire lit, and the evening meal prepared, the men got out their violins and bagpipes, and set themselves to enliven the night with music. There, in the clear space in front of the fire, they danced to the

tunes with great glee and skill. I sat beside the captain and watched the picture, and in very truth it was a pleasing one. The men, as I have said, were for the most part lithe and tall, and they danced with grace. The gipsy women after the age of twenty grow too harsh-featured for beauty and too manly in stature for elegance. But before that age they are uniformly pretty. The free open-air life and the healthy fare make them strong in body and extraordinarily graceful in movement. Their well-formed features, their keen laughing black eyes, their rich complexions, and, above all, their masses of coal-black hair become them choicefully well. So, there in the ruddy firelight, they danced to the quavering music, and peace for once in a while lay among them.

Meanwhile I sat apart with William Baillie, and talked of many things. He filled for me a pipe of tobacco, and I essayed a practice which I had often heard of before, but never made trial of. I found it very soothing, and we sat there in the bield of the tent and discoursed of our several wanderings. I heard from him wild tales of doings in the hills from the Pentlands to the Cumberland fells, for his habits took him far and wide in the country. He told all with the greatest indifference, affecting the air of an ancient Stote, to whom all things, good and evil alike, were the same. Every now and then he would break in with a piece of moralising, which he delivered with complete gravity, but which seemed to me matter for laughter, coming as it did after some racy narrative of how he vanquished Moss Marshall at the sheiling of Kipper-tree or cheated the alewife at Newbigging out of her score.

On the morrow all went off to the fair save

myself, and I was left with the children and the dogs. The captain had judged it better that I should stay, since there would be folk there from around Barns and Dawyck, who might penetrate my disguise and spread the tidings. So I stayed at home and pondered over many things, notably my present predicament. I thought of all my old hopes and plans—to be a scholar and a gentleman of spirit; to look well to my lands, and have a great name in the country-side; to study and make books; maybe even to engage in parliament and State business. And what did I now? Travelling in disguise among tinkers, a branded man, with my love and my lands in danger—nay, all but lost. It was this accursed thought that made the bitterest part of my wanderings.

I was in such a mood when a servant came from a farmhouse near to get one of the gipsies to come and mend the kitchen-pot. As I was the only one left, there was nothing for it but to go. The adventure cheered me, for its whimsicality made me laugh, and laughter is the best antidote to despair. But I fared very badly, for when I tried my 'prentice hand at the pot, I was so manifestly incapable that the goodwife drove me from the place, calling me an idle sornor and a lazy vagabond, and many other well-deserved names. I returned to the camp with my ears still ringing from her cuff, but in a more wholesome temper of mind.

The greater part of the others returned at the darkening, most with well-filled pockets, though I fear it was not all come by honestly; and a special feast was prepared. That gipsy meal was of the strangest yet most excellent quality. There was a savoury soup made of all kinds of stewed game and poultry, and after that the flesh of pigs and game roasted and broiled. There was no seasoning to the food save a kind of very bitter vinegar; for these people care little for salt or any condiment.

The meal was over, and I was thinking of lying down for the night, when William Baillie came back. I noted in the firelight that his face was black with anger. I heard him speak to several of his men, and his tone was that of one who was mastering some passion. By-and-by he came to where I sat and lay down beside me.

'Do you wish to pleasure me?' he said shortly.

'Why, yes,' I answered; 'you have saved my life, and I would do all in my power to oblige you, though I fear that just now my power is little.'

'It's a' I want,' said he, leaving his more correct speech for the broad Scots of the country-side. 'Listen, and I'll tell ye what happened the day at the fair. We tinker-folk gaed aboot our business, daein' ill to nane, and behavin' like daent, peaceable, quiet-mannered men and women. The place was in a gey steer, for a heap o' wast-country trash was there frae the backs o' Straven

and Douglasdale, and since a' the godly and reputable folk thereways ha'e taen to the hills, nane but the rabble are left. So we were gaun on canny, sellin' our bits o' things and dacin' our bits o' jobs, while the drucken folk were dancin' and cairryin' on at the ither end. By-and-by down the fair came a drucken gairdener, one John Cree. I ken him weel, a fesy, black-heritit scoondrel as ever I saw. My wife, whom you ken—for it was her that lookit after ye when ye were sick—was standin' at the side when the man secs her. He comes up to her wi' his leerin', blackgairdly face, and misca's her for a tinkler and a' that was bad, as if the warst in our tribe wasna better than him.

'Mary, she stands back, and bids him get out or she wad learn him mainners.

'But he wadna take a tellin'. "Oh ho, my bawbee joe," says he, "ye're braw and high the day. Whae are ye to despise an honest man? A wheen tinkler doxies!" And he took up a stane and struck her on the face.

'At this a' our folk were for puttin' an end to him there and then. But I keepit them back and bade them let the drucken fule be. Syne he gaed awa; but the folk o' the fair took him up, and we've got nocht but ill-words and ill-tongue a' day. But they'll pay for it the morn!' And the captain looked long and fiercely into the embers.

'I ha'e a plan,' said he after a little; 'and, Master Burnet, I want ye to help me. The folk o' the fair are just a wheen seum and riddlings. There are three o' us here, proper men—you and myself and my son Matthew. If ye will agree to it, we three will mount horse the morn, clear oot that fair, and frichten the folk o' Biggar for the next twalmonth.'

'What would you do?' said I.

'I ha'e three suits,' he said, 'o' guid crimson cloth, which I got frae my grandfather, and have never worn. I have three braw horses, which cam' oot o' England three year syne. If the three o' us mount and ride through the fair, there will be sic a scattering as was never heard tell o' afore i' the auld toun. And if that gairdener-body doesna gang wud wi' fricht, my name's no' William Baillie.'

Now, I do not know what madness prompted me to join in this freak. For certain, it was a most unbecoming thing for a man of birth to be perched on horseback in the company of two reckless tinkers, to break the king's peace and terrify his Majesty's lieges of Biggar. But a dare-devil spirit—the recoil from the morning's despondency—now held me. Besides, the romance of the thing took me captive; it was as well that a man should play all the parts he could in the world; and to my foolish mind it seemed a fine thing that one who was a man of birth and learning should not scruple to cast in his lot with the rough gipsies.

So I agreed readily enough, and soon after went to sleep with weariness, and knew nothing till the stormy dawn woke the camp.

Then the three of us dressed in the crimson suits, and monstrously fine we looked. The day was dull, cloudy, and with a threat of snow; and the massing of clouds which we had noticed the day before was now a thousandfold greater. We trotted out over the green borders of the bog to the town, where the riot and hilarity were audible. The sight of the three to any chance spectator must have been fearsome beyond the common. William Baillie, not to speak of his great height and strange dress, had long black hair, which hung far below his shoulders; and his scarlet hat and plume made him look like the devil in person. Matthew, his son, was somewhat smaller, but broad and sinewy; and he sat his horse with an admirable grace. As for myself, my face was tanned with sun and air and the gipsy dye; my hair hung loosely on my shoulders in the fashion I have always worn it; and I could sit a horse with the best of them.

When we came near the head of the street we halted and consulted. The captain bade us obey him in all, follow wherever he went, and, above all, let no word come from our mouth. Then we turned up our sleeves above the elbows, drew our swords, and rode into the town.

At the first sight of the three strange men who rode abreast, a great cry of amazement arose, and the miscellaneous rabble was hushed. Then in a voice of thunder the captain cried out that they had despised the gipsies the day before, and that now was the time of revenge. Suiting the

action to the word, he held his naked sword before him, and we followed at a canter.

I have never seen so complete a rout in my life. Stalls, booths, and tables were overturned, and the crowd flew wildly in all directions. The others of the tribe, who had come to see the show, looked on from the back, and to the terrified people seemed like fresh assailants. I have never heard such a hubbub as rose from the fleeing men and screaming women. Farmers, country-folk, and ploughmen mingled with fat burgesses and the craftsmen of the town in one wild rush for safety. And yet we touched no one, but kept on our way to the foot of the street, with our drawn swords held stark upright in our hands. Then we turned and came back; and lo! the great fair was empty, and wild, fearful faces looked at us from window and lane.

Then on our second ride appeared at the church gate the minister of the parish, a valiant man, who bade us halt.

'Stop,' said he, 'you men of blood, and cease from disturbing the town, or I will have you all elapped in the stocks for a week.'

Then the captain spoke up, and told him of the wrong and insult of the day before.

At this the worthy man looked grave. 'Go back to your place,' he said, 'and it shall be seen to. I am wae that the folk of this town, who have the benefit of my ministrations, set no better example to puir heathen Egyptians. But give up the quarrel at my bidding. "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay," saith the Lord.'

'But haply, sir,' said I, 'as Augustine saith, we may be the Lord's executors.' And with this we turned and rode off, leaving the man staring in open-mouthed wonder.

STRENGTH:

SOME ENDEAVOURS TO ATTAIN AND RETAIN IT.



ANY one telling us in a satisfactory manner how to get strong and remain so would be morally certain of fame and fortune and a kind of earthly immortality. This is what all seek but very few find; and there is always so much in heredity and environment; much also in ways of living, for every day we witness persons spending fortunes in gradually ruining their health, and others fortunes in vainly trying to regain what they have lost—indeed, the millions spent in the endeavour to regain health are quite beyond human calculation. So are the remedies; for every disease, almost without exception, save the Last Enemy, has its alleviation at least, if not its cure, in these enlightened days. According to Voltaire, every one wishes to live long, and nobody wishes to be old; but few will pay

the price demanded. Care killed a cat; therefore work as hard as you like, but do not worry. Never give in; battle to the last, said Sir Andrew Clark. Sir Isaac Holden, who died at the age of ninety, preached and practised open-air exercise, method, and a mild kind of vegetarianism. So did Sir Isaac Pitman, the apostle of shorthand, who was eighty-four when he died. Both had been very hard workers from youth till past middle age. So was Lord Armstrong, founder of the Elswick Works, who has had abundant hobbies and inventions always on hand; he was born in 1810, and confesses to having only indulged in a plain and wholesome diet. No man of this generation lived a more useful life than the late George Müller of Bristol, who died in his ninety-third year, yet in his youth he was threatened with consumption, and always had a weak digestion.

To return to Sir Isaac Holden. Even in later life he walked his seven or eight miles a day, in all weathers and in both town and country. At first a puny, unthriving child, he was forced to be regular and temperate. When he became book-keeper and manager at Cullingworth he stipulated with his employers that he should have two hours for open-air exercise every forenoon. This was part of his health programme. 'I know,' he said, 'innumerable cases of men who started with a constitution twice as strong as mine. They had no stomachs. I had a stomach, and was obliged to take care.'

And he did take care, and humoured his stomach in this way. He would take for breakfast one baked apple, one orange, twenty grapes, and a biscuit made from banana flour, of the virtues of which we have something to say farther on. His midday meal consisted of about three ounces of beef or mutton, with now and again a half-cupful of soup. If he took a little fish, he took so much less of meat. His diet at supper was practically a repetition of breakfast. It was a belief probably gained from Buchan's *Domestic Medicine* or Wesley's *Journal*, upon which he acted, that after the system had been built up, and the period of manhood reached, all starchy foods should be banished from the diet. Once, when complimented on the success of his methods of living, he explained: 'Some people imagine it to be my ambition to live to a great age. That is not exactly my object; but I do desire, so long as I am spared, to retain my senses, and to avoid the miseries and infirmities that so often accompany a carelessly regulated old age.'

'We eat too much,' says Dr Keith, who, in his *Plea for a Simpler Life*, seems to many the apologist for semi-starvation. When he reached seventy Oliver Wendell Holmes was as cheerful, if not quite as active, as ever, and he began with his trained doctor's mind and accurate observation to mark the on-coming of old age. In his old age Arthur Young, writer on agriculture, rose at 4 A.M. and walked till up to the neck in his garden pond!

There was some nonsense as well as wit and good sense in Charles Lamb's reply to his friend Bernard Barton, who sent him a complaining letter about his health. Lamb recommended Barton to keep himself as ignorant as the world was before Galen of the entire inner constitution of the animal man. He was to be unconscious of a midriff, and to hold kidneys, save of sheep and swine, to be an agreeable fiction. 'For,' he said, 'once fix the seat of your disorder, and your fancies flux into it like so many bad humours.' Curiously enough this is the conclusion come to by a writer in the *Daily News* on 'How to Live Long.' We are there told that they are likely to live longest who are too much engrossed with subjects of interest to greatly concern themselves with their own personal mechanism. With physiology

taught at every Board school such a state of mind is impossible, even were it desirable. The hypochondriac still consults and bores every friend he has regarding his ailments, and this very attitude of mind becomes an ailment in itself. He reads many doctors' books, and discovers symptoms of fresh troubles, especially if he is of a nervous temperament. He becomes a walking advertisement of cures which do not cure. Like the Cornish shopkeeper who sold a certain cure for coughs, and possessed a chronic cough himself, they cannot reply like him, when twitted with the remark, 'Physician, cure thyself,' that 'In me you behold a terrible example of the danger of delay: I left it too long before I took the medicine. See that you don't.'

Without going so far as a recent writer in the *Spectator*, who quotes a medical man's private utterance, that three-fourths of medicine was guess-work, we note that there has been within recent years a decided onslaught by both doctor and patient on the taking of drugs. Dr Smiles, who was a medical man before he was a book-maker, said years ago, in his first book on *Physical Education*, that the surest way to ensure health was to adopt the natural means to preserve it, by pure air, exercise, and a healthy supply of food. Children were then the victims, he thought, of a mania for medicine, and not infrequently destroyed by its too frequent use. The doctor should be a *preservator* of health rather than one who cures self-induced diseases. This has often been said since in other forms, as on 'The Use and Abuse of Medicine,' by a physician, in this *Journal*, May 5, 1849.

There is no use of running amuck against medicine, however, which is invaluable in its own place. But, like law, it is best to be independent of it, and by diet, temperance, and exercise to render it unnecessary. The remark has more than once been made: 'What untold good is done by the shiploads of oranges imported and consumed!' The same is true of apples and many other common fruits, which supplement solid food and act as correctives in keeping the system healthy. The lentil in all its forms is a strengthening and life-sustaining food. Mr H. M. Stanley has more than once acknowledged that he owes his life to banana meal. But, as imported from the West Indies, and sold at one shilling and sixpence a pound in this country, there is only a limited demand for it. 'If only,' says Mr Stanley in his *Darkest Africa*, 'the virtues of the flour were publicly known, it is not to be doubted but it would be largely consumed in Europe. During my two attacks of gastritis, a light gruel of this, mixed with milk, was the only matter that could be digested.' A letter from Mrs Stanley to the agent for the banana meal in Edinburgh relates how it had again pulled him through in June 1896.

We fancy that a good cook is sometimes as

worthy of canonisation as some of the dirty saints of antiquity, who isolated themselves from their fellow-men and did little to make the world go round. Cookery and domestic economy are rightly every-day subjects in our Board schools. Next generation should be less wasteful, and be able more widely and wisely to adapt food to the requirements of work and constitution.

Dr Thomas Oliver, physician to the Royal Infirmary, Newcastle, and Professor of Physiology in the University of Durham, some time ago read a paper at Budapest on 'The Best Diet of Toil.' He regrets, as so many have done, that tea and bread and butter have ousted milk and oatmeal porridge almost entirely from the diet of the people. He condemns the wives of many of the workers in the textile industries of Lancashire and Yorkshire as being ignorant of good cookery. Too much meat is eaten, and many nutritious vegetable food-stuffs, such as lentils, are not half-utilised. Irregular feeding of coal-miners, owing to a weekly shift of hours, leads to flatulent dyspepsia; many artisans induce this also by bolting their food. He has had practical demonstration of this in the infirmary in a *post-mortem* after a fatal accident.

Dr Oliver reminds us that the oils and fats stand first on the list as force-producers, and that these are followed by butter, cheese, oatmeal, flour, pease-meal, arrowroot, yolk of egg, sugar, bread, lean beef, potatoes, milk, and green vegetables. He gives sugar a high place as a help to the increase of muscular power—from six to thirty-nine per cent. in some instances. Sugar added to any diet greatly increases power of work and general resistance to fatigue; and he gives the testimony of Harley as to the absence of risk of diabetes. Sir Thomas Brassey found that the best navvies were teetotalers, and that where three hundred of them had to widen a gauge, and had to effect the change quickly, working night and day, a diet of oatmeal gruel was found most effective for keeping up their energy.

Dr Rubagliati of Leeds, in his recently issued book on *Air, Food, and Exercise* (1897), sets down colds, bronchitis, and cancer as the cumulative effects of excessive consumption of starchy foods, a conclusion which seems startling at first, but which is certainly worthy of serious consideration. He recommends, as Dr Keith and others have done, beginning the day with from half-a-pint to a pint of hot water an hour before breakfast. In his observation and experience, the most common and fatal habit is to eat food too often. He recommends five hours at least between meals, and if possible only two meals a day. Many men in this are a law unto themselves; and Victor Hugo, when working before breakfast, took a cup of black coffee and a raw egg, which kept up his strength without unduly withdrawing the blood from the brain.

This leads us to say something about exercise, which in the case of the busy and engrossed

professional man is sometimes neglected until too late. Cycling suits some people admirably. Mr T. P. O'Connor said lately that it had made a new man of him. Golf has worked wonders with others, and every one has a favourite form of exercise. A result of exercise and good health is that it breeds cheerfulness, which is radiated upon all around. An extraordinary case of cure from nervous breakdown is that related by an American gentleman, Mr Theodore H. Mead, in his *Health without Medicine*, issued by Dodd, Mead & Co., New York. He suffered from sleeplessness, shortness of breath, and two different sorts of headache. By a series of most original exercises, too elaborate to describe here, in his own chamber, and by cold bathing, he was restored to perfect health.

Count Sebastian F—, of Leghorn, has also issued a little pamphlet in which he declares that he feels quite young although in his seventy-first year. This 'apostle of physical education,' as he styles himself, describes in rhyme his daily routine of exercises. Before dressing in the morning he grooms his skin with stiff brushes until it glows. Next he hangs from a bar, drawing himself up and down ten times; then he raises himself several times by the right and left hand alone. His further evolutions, as far as we can understand him, seem to be his sitting like a miner, then raising himself repeatedly, and afterwards hopping to strengthen the sinews of the calf of the leg and thigh. Next he swings ten times between two chairs placed back to back, then he has club exercise, a race round the room, a jump over a stool, followed by a cold sponge-bath, which finishes this strange programme. He now returns to bed, takes a light breakfast, and afterwards dresses and saunters out. We are afraid some lazy people would count ten or twenty years of life dear at this price.

Perhaps the caution which Mr F. Marion Crawford, the novelist, has furnished is needed here. According to his experience, evening is the time to read, and night the time to sleep. A literary man, he believes, should take exercise, but no more than is necessary for health. 'It is vastly better,' he says, 'for the brain to rest too little than to practise athletics too much. Hard rowing, excessive walking, and running exhaust the brain as much as the body. I speak with knowledge, for I have done more physical work than most men in my time, and I do not believe it ever did me any good.' Athletics, he believes further, have been overdone in our day.

Eugene Sandow's secret of strength is now pretty much of an open secret to those who have seen his wonderful performances and read his books or the articles of the ubiquitous interviewer. *Exercise is as necessary as food* is one of his golden rules, and one he has acted upon. He lays down no hard-and-fast rules as to diet,

so long as his pupils are temperate and eat what agrees with them. He walks into his cold bath, although bathed in perspiration from some of his feats, and is not careful to dry himself much afterwards. The heat in the body soon does that when there is plenty of reaction. It might be rash in his pupils, however, to imitate him in this.

Until his tenth year, he tells us, he never knew what strength was. A visit along with his father to the sculpture galleries of Rome and Florence awakened within him an admiration of the splendidly developed sculptured figures of the athletes of old. When he returned to Königsberg it was his ambition to grow strong like them. He attended a gymnasium, and at eighteen studied anatomy. It was then he devised his system of developing the body by giving every muscle a separate movement, and he only devoted about fifteen minutes each day to his exercises. At twenty-one he had decidedly in-

creased in strength. In 1889 he heard of the challenge which Samson was making at the Royal Aquarium, London, of £100 to the first person who should rival the feats of Cyclops, and £1000 to any one who could beat his own. Sandow came, saw, and conquered, and this was the beginning of his career as a public performer in this country and America.

Constant and persistent exercise, therefore, of every muscle in the body is Sandow's open secret, and wherever he has performed, a crop of persons using his 'Exerciser' has sprung up. Not every one may become an athlete under his system; but where there is a healthy basis to work upon, his training seems to work wonders, and his School of Physical Culture has been crowded with pupils. To those who have perseverance and originality enough, a wonderful amount of muscular vigour and good health thus seems possible; yet many find Doctors Diet, Quiet, and Merryman still the best of physicians.

A THUG'S CONSCIENCE.

By F. W. EVANS.



YOU lads have a fine time of it nowadays, with your machine-guns and a commissariat that knows canned meat from castor-oil.

It was an Indian veteran who spoke—Colonel Carrill—to whom Myers and I, returned from Dacoit-hunting in Burma, had been relating our exploits.

'Fifty years ago fighting was fighting,' he went on, 'but now'—

We smiled the smile of the young and up-to-date. What did he know of the vagaries of the modern savage: of the Dacoit who came in the night noiselessly and parted life and death with an ugly and unnecessarily large stab in the breast?

The colonel read our thoughts.

'Dacoits may be a stealthier foe,' he said, 'but for undiluted vagabondism and downright villainy give me the Thugs.'

'They must have been bad,' I ventured.

'At the very best; and yet I found a little grain of virtue in one,' said the veteran. 'Shall I tell you a yarn? It will be like a page of ancient history now, but I don't think it has been told before; and really Hosein Ali was a picturesque scoundrel who deserved record—and hanging.'

'It was in the autumn of '34,' proceeded the colonel, 'I went out from Hyderabad under Major Groves northward across the Godavery after Thugs. The authorities were getting their eyes wide open at last, and a great effort was being made to exterminate the villains. After a week or so of reconnoitring and inquiry we separated.

Groves sent me off on my own account with a troop of about thirty sepoy and a couple of non-coms. We had no success until Hosein Ali fell into our hands. He was taken, not exactly red-handed, but just after the act, with the proofs of guilt thick upon him and the spoil in his possession. Yet he denied with all the stubbornness of innocence.

'I know nothing of what you say, sahib. I am from beyond the Kristna.'

'I looked long and fixedly at the man. He was a fine specimen of a fine race. Tall, and straight as a bamboo; comely of feature and limb, with a handsome and well-kept beard and moustache, and black eyes which glowed with indignation and a hint of defiance, he looked anything but the scoundrel he was. If I had not been so absolutely certain of his guilt, I must have doubted that one of so gallant a bearing could be that worst of all criminals, a Thug.'

'What are you doing here, then?' I asked him. 'What is your trade, your occupation? How did you come by these pearls?'

'If I answer the sahib at all,' he replied, 'it is that he may be satisfied and let me go on my journey in peace. I am on travel honestly to my sister's wedding, and the stones are a wedding gift.'

'The words came glibly off his tongue; but just as my eyes left his I saw the defiant expression change for a second to a furtive glance, which seemed to me to say, "Is he fool enough to believe it?"'

'I don't believe a word,' said I, replying to his glance; 'you are a Thug and a murderer, and deserve hanging a hundred times; but—make

yourself useful: tell me your companions, show me their haunts, take me to the graves of your victims, and your life may be spared."

"I know nothing of what you say, sahib," he repeated doggedly.

"Take him away," I commanded, "and in ten minutes' time hang him."

"Of course this was pure bounce, but he knew no better. I uttered the sentence sharply and rose to leave the hut. As I turned my back I heard a scuffle, and, looking quickly round, was just in time to ward the prisoner's hands from my throat. Taking the sepoy by surprise, he had with great energy dashed them aside and sprung at me.

"In another moment the men had him down; and, though he struggled desperately, he was bound and dragged to his feet as I resumed my seat.

"None but the guilty would have behaved so," I said sternly—I knew no better in those days. "You have sealed your doom!"

"The man took a deep breath—he was still panting from the struggle—and shouted with an excess of strength and enthusiasm:

"*Jey Bhovane,*"

"It was the war-cry of Thuggee—the invocation to the goddess. If anything more was needed to convict him, it was provided in the extraordinary change in his appearance. All the signs of vice and cupidity which I had looked for in vain at first were now most prominent in the angry, passion-distorted face.

"After short consideration I sent him back to confinement. It was plain that we had made a capture of the first importance. The circumstances under which he had been taken, the demeanour and bearing of the man, his strength of will and virility, marked him as more than ordinarily dangerous. Such a man would, without doubt, be the leader, or at least a very prominent member, of any gang with which he was connected, and would possess just the sort of information we wanted. On the other hand, just these qualities in virtue of which his information would be so valuable would in all probability prevent us from acquiring it. Informers are supposed to be built of different material.

"However, I determined to try him, and as a first step I had him informed that unless he consented to give the information we wanted, he would certainly be hanged in the morning. As an extra argument we built a gallows opposite the window of his cell.

"At first this only excited his derision. For an hour or more he kept up a stream of ribald and obscene jests, varied with vindictive and comprehensive curses which made the sepoy guard alternately laugh and shake their fists in righteous anger.

"The small hours of morning, however, proved too much for him. I was wakened early and told he wanted to speak.

"Tell him he can say all he wants under the

rope," was my reply. I thought a little more fear of death would make his tongue all the readier.

"When the hour came the man was led out. Nothing remained of the scorn and defiance of the previous day; a night of passion and fear had broken him up.

"As he caught sight of me he called out: 'I will tell all, Sahib Bahadur.' One of the sepoy, previously instructed, began to busy himself with the rope.

"All!" I said; "nothing kept back?"

"Nothing," he answered eagerly. "All I have done, and my companions."

"And their names, all of them?"

"Yes."

"And help us to take them by all means and strategies in your power?"

"He hesitated at this; but a glance at the man who held the rope, and who had now made a pretty noose in it, was enough.

"I will, sahib," he muttered. "My life will be saved?"

"On condition that you carry out your promise to the letter, I will do my best to save it."

"A table was brought, my native clerk prepared his writing materials, and there, within a yard of the gibbet, the prisoner told a tale of murder and robbery appalling in its extent, sickening in its cold-bloodedness and deliberation. To this he added a list of some thirty or forty accomplices, and, with a remarkable effort of memory, described the position of the rude graves of over one hundred victims.

"The same day we set out to investigate, and the following evening reached one of the indicated spots. There we found buried proof of the reality of one part of the Thug's confession, and, in that, a guarantee for the truth of the rest.

"A couple of weeks of activity passed. Thanks to Hosein, who had been shaven and otherwise disguised, we not only collected ample proof of the crimes committed, but succeeded in securing many of the culprits, who were taken to the nearest court and tried. By a judicious setting of caste against caste we managed to cause recriminations and retaliations amongst the prisoners, which led to their convicting each other, and so avoided the necessity of producing Hosein Ali as a witness—a course which would have been fatal to his usefulness.

"So far the informer had amply fulfilled his contract. He had, indeed, displayed a zeal which made me at times very doubtful of his sincerity. No government officer could have been more anxious to run the culprits to earth, no one more fruitful in devices to entrap them. I found out at last that this thoroughness was characteristic of the man in all things.

"One day I told him I thought he might count on getting off cheap, his services had been so valuable and so willingly given. I added a hope that he would lead a different life when the business was all over.

"What business, sahib?" he asked.

"When Thuggee is suppressed," I replied.

"Thuggee!" He made a wide gesture with his arms as though to indicate all India, and added, with a little smile that had a grain of pride in it: "We shall be old men, sahib."

"I was but twenty-three then, and incredulous; but he was right. I was gray when I came home, and I left Thugs behind me."

"Well, the further the work of suppression advanced, the more difficult it became. The Thugs had enjoyed impunity so long that many of the bands had become careless and were taken with comparative ease; but as the news of their capture spread, and the fate which met them became known, the villains grew more wary and difficult of approach."

"We had, of course, spies and scouts out in all directions. The inhabitants of the villages were even too eager to give us information, and often the accounts were so conflicting that I was at a loss. In these difficulties Hosein was invaluable. He smelt out the true and reliable, and knew exactly what the Thugs in this or that dilemma would do or attempt."

"About a month after Hosein's capture we got on the heels of a band which, by the signs, numbered about forty members. Instead of following them up, we crossed the river along the banks of which they were marching, and, hurrying on, got in advance of them. We knew they would have to cross later, and hoped to ambush them. The bank on our side of the river was covered with a thick and broad belt of jungle, beyond which was a chain of hills whose lower slopes were well wooded. In the shade of these trees we rested for the noon. In the early afternoon one of our scouts came in with news. About a mile in front of us he had seen a party of natives, whose manner seemed to him suspicious, entering a grove of trees. The possibility that this was a detachment of the band we were after at once occurred to me. We were on our feet at once, and pushing forward with all circumspection, almost succeeded in surrounding the grove without detection. At the last moment we were seen. We charged in, but, to our surprise, met with no resistance. Instead, indeed, of a band of determined and defiant robbers, we broke in on what seemed to be a party of travelling merchants in the deepest distress. The air was full of low lamentations. Pushing my way into the group, I saw the cause of the trouble. A body lay stretched out in the unmistakable attitude of death, covered reverently with a linen cloth. Catching sight of me, one of the mourners spoke.

"Shookr Khoda! Now shall the wicked suffer."

"What is wrong?" I inquired.

"Thugs!" was the reply. "Our brother left us this morning in a fit of anger to continue his journey alone. Here we overtake him at noon, dead, and the villains are gone."

"I plied the men with questions as to the direction taken by the robbers. "Eastward," they said. They had not seen them, but, from various signs, were confident. This was contrary to all our ideas as to their route, and I was considering how to rearrange our plans, when I heard Hosein Ali's voice whispering behind me: "My lord must not look round or show surprise. This body is still warm. The man is but just dead, and they who mourn have killed him. They are Thugs," he added.

"I was too bewildered at first to speak, but, pulling myself together, partly grasped the situation."

"Turning to the spokesman of the party, I did my best to convince him that I was completely taken in; and, assuring him that we should most certainly pursue the culprits, left him, ostensibly to make preparations to that end."

"Now, what is this?" I asked Hosein.

"They are Thugs," he repeated, "an advanced guard who came across this traveller unexpectedly. They had just strangled him as we rushed in. This is an old dodge."

"What is it?"

"This pretence of finding the man dead, and mourning."

"Old as it was, I was all but taken in, and but for Hosein the villains would have got away and sent me on a wild-goose chase."

"In view of this, it was somewhat humbly I asked Hosein what was best to be done."

"Let these all be seized and bound without noise," he said, with his usual decision; "the rest will come across after dark, and we will take them also."

"It was no easy matter to carry out this plan. The Thugs were prone to suspicion, and, once alarmed, would fight desperately. However, by setting part of them to furnish my clerk with an account of the affair—an account which was afterwards highly esteemed as a specimen of impromptu lying—and plying the others with questions as to the direction taken by the alleged assassins, we managed to lull suspicion and divide the party into groups. Then, at a given signal, we threw them and tied them securely, to their intense amazement and disgust."

"We did not move from the grove till daylight began to die out. Hosein had the whole detachment busy for some hours cutting a number of short bamboo sticks and boring holes in their ends, through which short lengths of cord were run. He had a way of holding his tongue until questioned, and, moreover, liked to have his plans matured before being called on to explain them; so I let him proceed unquestioned until I saw he was ready."

"What are these things for?" I then asked him.

"Food for the Thugs, sir," he replied. "When they taste these they are silent."

"Then I perceived that the mysterious articles were gags."

"They will come across the ford to-night," con-

tinued Hosein. "We will be in waiting, and as they land one by one, seize them and stop their voices."

"How can you be sure they will cross?" said I.

"Shall I not tempt them?" he answered.

"Shall I not light a fire and send a cry across the water as these would have done if God had not delivered them into our hands?"

"How many of them are there?"

"I should say from thirty to forty."

"And we must leave a guard with the prisoners. We shall have our hands full," I said cautiously.

"I know this ford so well," responded Hosein; "only one man can land at a time. If the sahib will permit, I will stand by the bank and assist them out singly. It will be dark to-night, and there will be rain. Some of your men must leave their coats and dress like Thugs; and as I hand over the first of the robbers two of them shall seize him, fill his mouth with the wood, and tie him up so that he makes neither sound nor motion. In like manner with the others. The jungle and the rain will help us."

"It was a simple, daring scheme. It seemed one moment to be absolutely impracticable, and the next to have no real defect. Its very audacity was its strength. Of my two sepoy sergeants, to whom I explained the idea, one was certainly dubious; but he was always somewhat jealous of Hosein; the other was an optimist of the first class, and would just as cheerfully have tackled the job in broad daylight with half the force. In the end I consented. It would be a great feather in our caps if it succeeded."

"When the time came we moved noiselessly down to the ford, leaving six of our party with the prisoners in the grove. The night had settled in wet and starless. The jungle thickened towards the river. I had no little difficulty in elosely following Hosein, who guided us. He ducked the low branches and squirmed through the thick undergrowth like a cat. A score of chattering creatures scurried away at our disturbing footsteps. A swift hare ran right across our guide's path, at which he stood stock-still and trembled."

"The worst of omens," he whispered; "it means failure and death."

"To Thugs?" I queried.

"Yes."

"Then push on," I replied; "it means failure and death to your friends across the river."

"He was heartened at once, and went on. My first indistinct view of the ford renewed my previous distrust of Hosein's good faith. It seemed the last place one would select for a passage. The banks were ten or twelve feet high, and rose sheer out of the water. By looking closely, however, I made out a large, flat rock standing about five feet out of the stream and close to the bank, forming a natural if somewhat difficult step. The bank was only attainable by

first climbing the rock. All my distrust vanished: Hosein's plan fitted the place like the bark on a tree.

"Our dispositions were quickly made. The signal-fire was lit, and, after the proper interval, extinguished; and we lay down in silence to wait for the next move. The smell of the Indian night was an oppression; the rain was bringing out a hundred heavy fragrances from the plants, and a steamy cold moisture seemed to cover us as we lay. As the minutes passed and the noise of our approach ceased, the voices in the jungle were again manifest

"At last we saw the answering fire. Hosein let himself down to the stepping-stone and stood erect. At the same moment the shriek of a jackal close at hand made me jump to my feet. From across the river the cry was repeated, and then I knew it was the second signal.

"As I stood I saw how hazardous Hosein's position was. He had only a narrow and wet foothold, and at the first glimmer of suspicion might be dragged off and murdered before any one could get to his assistance. I advanced a step with the view of bettering the arrangement, but Hosein, hearing the sound, turned, raising his hands warningly with a whispered "Choop!" and I lay down again. A minute or two of extreme tension followed, and then, above the whipping sound of the rain on the river, I could just hear the careful splashing of the waders. Soon the head of the first one came dimly into sight, a black moving spot on the dark water, and behind it, in Indian file, other blots still more indistinct. As the leader neared the bank Hosein said a couple of words in "Moor," which elicited a low reply. I then saw him stoop and draw the man on to the rock beside him. It was an exciting moment, and I know I trembled—solely, I hope, from over-anxiety.

"The Thug gave himself a shake, and grasping the bank, climbed up. He reached the little group of disguised sepoys; there was a slight scuffle, and then all was quiet. The first one was secured.

"Six or seven more followed, and were secured with scarcely more noise than a scurrying rat would cause. As each one attained an upright position on the bank, he was gagged, overpowered, and laid out in the jungle helplessly bound. There was an anxious pause after the twelfth man, and from the rock below I heard a lot of whispering. Just as I was thinking it advisable to risk asking the reason, I saw Hosein stoop, draw up a large bundle, and throw it up on to the bank.

"The Thugs were passing us their booty!

"The remainder of the band brought each a similar parcel. I had crept to the assistance of my men, whose exertions to secure the robbers noiselessly were beginning to tell on them. As we approached the end one or two squeals escaped, but fortune favoured us and no alarm was given. Hosein's endurance was marvellous. One after another he helped the victims out of

the water and passed them up, and always with a sufficient interval. When, once or twice, we had more than the usual difficulty in convincing one of the captives of the wisdom of silence, he detained the next a while before landing him. Still, even he relaxed a trifle in the end. By some means the last man but one to cross took alarm as he reached the bank, and yelled out a warning. He was quickly pulled down and secured, but his successor, just about to reach up his hand to Hosein, hesitated and retreated. I heard a big splash, and Hosein disappeared. He had jumped in after the man, and engaged in a struggle which we could hear but only dimly see. As there was no need for further concealment, I climbed down the bank and slipped into the water, followed by one of my men. Hosein had apparently overpowered his man, and was forcing him towards the bank. As we approached, the Thug uttered a furious sentence in a dialect which I did not understand, and the next moment he was free and hurrying away. Hosein, for the first time to my knowledge, seemed dumbfounded and without resource. The sepoy and I dashed after the escaping Thug and held him. He was an elderly but exceedingly powerful man, who fought tooth and nail, and was only secured after the sepoy had hit him across the head with the hilt of his bayonet.

"With this we had them all: thirty-three murderers and twenty bales of spoil—a fine haul.

"We spent the remainder of the night in the grove where we had surprised the first lot, and early next day pushed on to Teuree, where I expected to find a court sitting.

"Following our usual precaution, Hosein travelled with the rear-guard, so that the prisoners should not see more of him than was necessary, although I more than suspected that he had been recognised by the old Thug. Something had changed him, anyhow. He was strangely thoughtful, even morose; and when he did speak, it was, for the first time, of his wife and child. It was plain that he was passionately fond of both, and his

great concern was that they might not learn what his occupation had been.

"Arrived at our destination, we found the court already sitting, so that our prisoners had not long to wait. In a couple of days the case against them was presented. The proofs of their guilt were overwhelming, and, as they thought more of defiance than defence, they were soon convicted and sentenced—fifteen of them, including the old man who had so nearly escaped, to be hanged, the rest to transportation to Penang.

"The following morning was fixed for the execution. Three hackeries conveyed the doomed men to the gibbets. They kept, or tried to keep, up their courage by the coarsest ribaldry and by jeering at their escort.

"As they stood in the centre of the clearing before ascending the platform, Hosein Ali created a sensation by slipping forward and kneeling humbly and contritely before the old Thug. The latter, with an indescribable accent of scorn, uttered a couple of words and spat derisively on the informer.

"The next moment the culprits had mounted the gallows. As each man stepped up he took the rope in his hands and tested it by bearing on it with all his weight. Satisfied of this, the fifteen men almost simultaneously thrust their heads through the nooses, and drawing the knots tight, jumped off the platform with a last cry of "Victory to Bhowanee!"

"The hangman's touch would have robbed them of caste.

"The excitement of this scene was not over when a fresh sensation was caused by the discovery of a man lying a short distance from the gallows with a bayonet through his heart, having killed himself by falling on the blade.

"It was Hosein Ali!

"What is the meaning of this?" I cried.

"One of the bystanders turned towards the still swinging bodies of the Thugs, and pointing to the old man, said:

"That was his father!"

CURIOSITIES OF EARLY INSURANCE.

THE insuring of property is a practice so common as to be one of the daily features of modern business life, and the pushing canvasser is not likely to let us drop into forgetfulness of its advantages. So thoroughly is insurance recognised as one of the leading principles in carrying on trade or holding property that one might naturally suppose it had taken its rise out of those commercial necessities which the nineteenth century has made more imperative on every one than they ever were before. The principle, however, is not so new; it has been

known and in common use for at least four or five centuries. Some writers, indeed, have maintained that marine insurance was practised by the Romans, and quote passages from the Roman historians to prove their assertion; but the instances given do not warrant the inference—they are rather cases where the one party to a transaction stipulates for compensation from the other in case of loss. The origin of real insurance, as it is now understood, must apparently be sought for in the annals of medieval commerce, and instances of it can be quoted from at least the early part of the fourteenth century. Spaniards, Italians, and Flemings

have been variously credited with the discovery; but it is still doubtful to which of them the honour belongs.

Although marine insurance was thus a regular practice of these trading nations from the fourteenth century onwards, it is remarkable that insurance against fire is not heard of until the beginning of the seventeenth century. In 1609 a plan of fire insurance was proposed by some one to the Duke of Oldenburg, who was advised to insure the houses of all his subjects, in return for a yearly payment of a sum proportionate to their value. The duke, however, had the feeling (still shared by many on the question of life insurance) that it was a 'tempting of Providence,' for which, and other reasons, he declined the proposal.

It was the Great Fire of London that first made fire insurance a regular institution. The immense loss caused by this disaster opened the eyes of business men to the necessity for a remedy, and from 1669 to 1681 various schemes of insurance were laid before the Court of Common Council; but in the latter year a private company took the initiative, and the court soon abandoned the slight attempt it made to issue insurance policies. The growth and multiplication of such companies since that time, more especially during the present century, is a natural result of the increase of wealth and of public appreciation of the benefits of insurance. It may be noticed, however, that the working of these early societies differed from the method now in use, and approached more closely to the ancient form which we are about to describe.

Centuries before the wise citizens of London recognised the value of fire insurance there existed a most interesting form of it, and that not in any of the great commercial nations of the Middle Ages, but in a remote island of the Atlantic—in Iceland. This fact, remarkable as it is in itself, will not seem so surprising to those who are acquainted with the ancient condition of that country, which has for several hundred years played but a small part in European history. Its first colonists, in the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth centuries, were among the most enterprising of Norway's sons; and for the next three centuries their new home rivalled the mother-country in most respects, and far excelled it in mental activity. The old poetry of Norway died out about the year 1000 A.D., and from that date, so long as there were skalds at the court of the Norwegian kings, they were Icelanders. At the same time they were careful farmers, daring seamen, and enterprising traders. They traded regularly with all the neighbouring countries, and thought little of an overland journey to Constantinople, where many of them served in the bodyguard of the Byzantine Emperor. At home, next to the necessary care of their herds and flocks, they were above all devoted to poetry, history, and law. To be skilled in the latter was a sure title to respect at a time when law-books were still unknown, and codes were

carried in the head of the 'Lawman,' or declared by the 'Law-speaker' at the meetings of the Althing, or yearly assembly. In the thirteenth century these laws of use and wont came to be written down, not officially, it would seem, as happened in other countries, but by persons interested in legal studies, and they are now preserved in a collection commonly known as *Grá-gás*, or gray-goose (a name of doubtful origin), which is used as a general name for the laws of Iceland prior to its union with Norway in 1262.

It is in this collection of laws that the interesting item of compensation for loss by fire occurs, a section which is quoted by the editor of an Icelandic journal of last year, in the first of a series of articles on the ancient civilisation of Iceland. The editor, Dr Valtýr Guðmundsson, is one of the best authorities on this subject, and uses the quotation as a text to point out to his countrymen the superior foresight of their ancestors in this respect. The modern Icelandic has not yet realised the value of insurance, as shown by the fact that one of the foremost yeomen in the country had his farm burned down three times in succession without its being insured. It was otherwise in the old days, as Dr Valtýr points out. In the time of the old republic, the golden age of Iceland, every yeoman-farmer was by law compelled to be a member of a mutual insurance society. The method by which compensation for loss by fire was made is thus explained in *Grá-gás*, and is a striking proof of the thoroughly practical views of the old Icelanders:

'There are three houses in every man's dwelling for which compensation may be obtained in event of their being burned down.' (In Icelandic dwellings each room was a separate building, and so is called a 'house.') 'One is the women's sitting-room, another the common sitting-room, and the third the pantry where the women prepare the food. If a man has both a sitting-room and a hall, then at the spring assembly he shall choose whether he will rather have the sitting-room or the hall insured. If there is a church or chapel on any man's farm, then that is the fourth house liable for compensation, where it exists. If any of these houses afore-mentioned is burned down, the owner shall summon five of his neighbours, and get them to estimate the damage that has been done. They shall estimate the damage done to the house itself, and also that done to clothes and other valuables burned along with it; but only such clothes and valuables as the owner requires for daily use shall be reckoned for compensation. If a church is burned, there shall be reckoned along with it for compensation all the hangings, the choir, and the best bell that has been destroyed, if there were more than one, and all the furniture required for daily use; the same thing shall be done in the case of chapels.'

When the damage had been valued by the neighbours, as above provided, one-half of the loss had

to be borne by the yeoman himself, and the other half was made good by all the other yeomen in the district. From each of these a certain amount was levied in proportion to the value of his property, and if this were not paid within a specified time it could be seized by law. At the same time it was provided that no one could be called upon to pay as his share more than one per cent. of his whole property, and it was not compulsory to compensate the same person for loss by fire more than three times.

This, it will be seen, was a procedure lying between regular insurance and State compensation. There was no real premium; but neither was there any necessity for it, because there was a sufficient funded stock in the whole property of the district. The method was, indeed, very similar to that of the first London companies, which called upon their members to pay their shares only when a fire actually occurred. There was here no company requiring to make a profit out of the insurance, nor was there any temptation to wilful fire-raising, because only the most necessary articles were insured, and even in their case half of the loss fell on the owner himself. The trouble of collecting the separate payments in each case was no doubt a drawback, as it would prevent the unfortunate yeoman from making a new start at once. It shows, however, a practical grasp of things that provision was thus made to prevent one who was perhaps a man of wealth and influence from suddenly losing a large part of his property, and with it his power. The influence of the great yeomen was a power for good in the Icelandic republic, and it would have been actually dangerous to the peace of a district if any such sudden revolution of fortune took place, and the wealthy man of one day was the beggar of the next. Such a change, however, might happen not only through losing his house by fire, but still more easily and disastrously by the loss of his live-stock. The Icelandic's greatest wealth on land lay in his cattle (not so much in sheep then as now), and it was quite as necessary to be secured against loss from that quarter as from the burning of his house. Accordingly the law also provided compensation for the loss of cattle by disease, but with similar precautions against its abuse as in the case of fire.

'Compensation shall be given,' says *Grá-gás*, 'if the pest attacks a man's cattle, so that a fourth part or more of his stock die by it; then the district shall make good the loss. He shall summon five of his neighbours within two weeks after the pest ceases, and get them to estimate his loss. He shall state his loss to them, and show them the flesh and hides of the cattle that have died. Then he shall take an oath to them that his loss is as he has stated, or greater. He shall then declare in assembly how much his loss has been valued at, and the yeomen shall compensate him for half of it.'

As in the previous case, the amount paid by each person was not to exceed one per cent. of his

whole property, even although more than one person was entitled to compensation. 'If several men suffer loss in one season they shall be all compensated equally until the one per cent. has been paid. If the amount thus raised does not cover half the loss of each, then each of them shall receive so much less compensation in proportion as his loss is less.' By this limitation the inhabitants of a district were secured against excessive burdens, for in one year it might happen that the number of sufferers would be so large as to cause serious embarrassment if each had to be paid his full share. At the same time it would greatly increase the total loss to the individual, and in event of a widespread disease would be found a very inadequate provision. This is, perhaps, the weakest part of a scheme otherwise well contrived; witness the precaution against fraud by requiring that the flesh and hides of the dead cattle should be produced to the valuers.

These laws, which are peculiar to Iceland and not found in any of the other Scandinavian codes, show an amount of forethought and good-fellowship that is very striking. In this nineteenth century we have got the length of providing compensation for the farmer in cases of cattle disease, but rather by way of reconciling him to preventive measures than of helping him to get over his loss. In the case of damage by fire his only protection lies in the insurance company, to which he pays money without certainty of any return beyond the feeling of security it may afford him; or, if he does happen to find it a fortunate investment, he may yet incur the suspicions of his more uncharitable neighbours. There the Icelanders were a little wiser, treating it not as a matter of business, but as a measure for the welfare of the community, and to them, apparently, we must assign the credit of the first organised scheme to provide against losses of this kind. 'History repeats itself,' and many an excellent institution that seems to bear the true nineteenth century stamp upon it has flourished in unsuspected times and places.

S U M M E R.

Now Summer comes, on golden wing,
From sunny lands across the sea;
And wavelets, dancing joyously,
Their tinkling song of gladness sing.
O, dark the Winter lay, and drear,
Upon the lonely Northland isles;
But Ocean's face is wreathed in smiles,
And life and hope again are here.
So, heart, the lights and shades will fall
And checker all the climbing way,
And Hope will chant her roundelay,
And Life anew thrill to her call;
And men will move, with faces set,
Towards the lonely heights afar
Where lightens, like the morning star,
The Cross on Heaven's minaret.

J. J. HALDANE BURGESS.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

IN DARKEST TOKIO.

THOSE who have gathered their impressions of Japan from writers of the Sir Edwin Arnold type would imagine the country to be a land of eternal sunshine, where want and care were unknown, and where the people led simple lives, free from the evils of both luxury and want. Even among many who have lived for years in Japan, it has been the conventional view that, if wages are low, living and shelter are so cheap that there is nowhere to be seen such terrible destitution as is visible in Western cities. The truth is that foreigners seldom take the trouble to investigate the conditions under which the lowest class exists—it can hardly be described as living—in the larger Japanese cities. They do not know the shifts and struggles in which thousands are engaged in such towns as Tokio and Osaka in order to keep body and consciousness together. Industrialism, we have been told, is responsible for much of the destitution in the great towns of the West, as it produces a condition of things under which the poor grow poorer and the rich richer. But in Japan industrialism, with its tendency to aggregate the workers in factories, in which capital can more easily exploit labour, is comparatively a new thing. In some respects and in certain localities it may have intensified the struggle for existence, but it certainly did not create the state of destitution under which large masses of the town populations live.

The problem of poverty has not hitherto attracted much attention in Japan, where, as in other Oriental countries, it has been looked upon as a necessary evil. As in Palestine, 'The poor ye have always with you' summed up the situation to-day and for all time; and no Japanese philosopher has even suggested that it would be a solution if the rich sold all that they had and gave the proceeds to the poor. Again, the fact that there has been no system of national relief to the destitute, no poor-rate, no institutions similar to our workhouses, and few, if any, charity organisations, has doubtless

also had its effect in preventing any discussion of the problem. But the introduction of Western literature and Western ideas into the country is beginning to attract attention to the subject; and within the last few months a remarkable series of articles has been contributed to the *Kokumin Shimbun*, a vernacular journal of considerable influence, dealing with the conditions under which so many thousands live and die in such a city as Tokio. The chapters have recently been collected and published by *The Eastern World*, an English weekly published in Yokohama, and they form remarkable reading.

Emulating the methods of some English journalists, Mr Matsubara Iwagoro, the author, clothed himself in the most ragged and shabby of garments, and went down into the poorest districts of Tokio, working, eating, and sleeping as those about him did, in order to thoroughly realise the conditions under which their existence was passed. Life in the capital of the empire he found to be supported by tens of thousands simply on the leavings of their more fortunate brethren, while shelter from the elements was obtained in erections that were little more than kennels. In many parts of Tokio a few thin boards, having a frontage of about nine feet, and roofed with some cracked tiles, constitute the houses of the poor. The timber is old and broken, the floors scarcely raised above the ground, and the posts barely substantial enough to keep the houses upright. In a place called Samegahashi these low one-story houses adjoin each other like the compartments of a railway train. In another district, known as Mannen-cho, matters are still worse; while a collection of several hundred houses in a third district, known as Shin-ami-cho, show a degree of dirt and squalor that defies description. The alleys are a swamp of foul water; dead rats lie festering in the sun; the public latrines—to give them a more decent name than they deserve—are left to take care of themselves; heaps of old clogs, spoiled rice, and decaying fish make the air pestiferous; the houses are ruinous hovels, with tattered straw-mats supplying the

place of broken tiles; and, to sum up, says the investigator, 'the place looks like a fort in the wilderness that has been riddled by shot and shell.'

Such houses have landlords, and those who live, sleep, eat, work, and bring up families in them have to pay rent like other people. Rents are collected daily and in advance, for otherwise the landlord would never get his due, as of course those who inhabit such hovels simply live from hand to mouth. There are degrees of 'desirableness' even in these lower depths. For houses of the 'best' class, having one room of four and a half *mats* (a *mat* is six feet by three, the dimensions of Japanese rooms being always thus calculated), the rent is four *sen* a day—that is, one penny in English values; but these are comparatively of a superior class. In the *nagaya* (long houses under one roof, divided into compartments) a dwelling occupies only three *mats*, placed side by side, so that with such a restricted space all household work is performed outside. For such a room the rent charged is two or three farthings per day. But there are still lower depths to which unfortunate wretches may sink, and these have to be content with houses whose accommodation may be gauged from the fact that the rent exacted is from one and a half to one and three-quarter farthing per day. These places are ruinous hovels which are never repaired, and 'resemble the caves or hiding-places of wild beasts;' nevertheless, horrible and wretched as is the accommodation, one hovel will sometimes shelter two or more families.

What occupation, it will be asked, do the people follow who are driven to such extremities as this? Mr Matsubara says that the inhabitants of these places are small hawkers, rag-men, second-hand clothes dealers, decayed jinrikisha-men, coolies who drag heavy loads from distant villages for eight farthings a journey, shampooers (many of whom are blind), charm-doctors, perambulating story-tellers, and cross-road lecturers (or 'reciters,' as they would be called in England), together with men and women belonging to what may be called the lowest grade of the criminal classes; though these are few in number compared to those whose only crime is poverty. The furniture of the houses is of a character with the rickety buildings. The thick straw-mats, laid on the rough boards of Japanese floors, are broken and torn, and the straw protrudes in frayed tufts; but on them a family of four or five persons will sit, sleep, eat and drink, and work. Yet there is always room for the little *Butsudan*, or Buddhist shrine, at which the family pray. 'The gods,' says the Japanese writer, 'have forsaken the poor; but the poor—one scarcely understands why—still cling to the gods.' The bedding is simply a heap of rags; and when times are particularly hard even this becomes a luxury. The *hibachi* over which food is cooked—when it can be procured—is battered and broken, and the family kettle is

in a similar plight. Such, together with a paper umbrella and a few much-worn clogs, comprise what may be dignified by the name of furniture in these hovels; and it is under such conditions that tens of thousands live in Tokio.

It is impossible for such people to buy clean rice in quantity sufficient to satisfy hunger, and so remnants of food thrown away by houses of the better class are systematically collected from door to door by men who scrape a subsistence out of the business, and the damaged or soiled rice is dried and sold at very low prices under the name of *hoshii*. Thus the leavings of rice at the Military College are collected and sold to the poor at six or seven *rin* a pound (ten *rin* equal one farthing). In the same way remnants of fish and pickled or boiled vegetables are collected and sold by measure. The entrails of large fish can be purchased cheap, and there are shops where small portions of shark and tunny-fish can be procured at prices that will suit the means of the poor wretches who live each day from hand to mouth. Those who earn as much as ten *yen* (twenty shillings) a month spend about one-half in food, whilst the other half goes for house-rent, clothing, bedding, household utensils, and the various daily necessities. But there are few of the class here particularly dealt with whose earnings reach ten *yen* a month.

However destitute their condition, the poor have harpies that batten on their misfortunes. There are many small money-lenders in the poor quarters of Tokio, and lenders of articles that the poor need but cannot afford to buy, whose business is a very profitable one. The pawnbroker, says the author, does not refuse anything that has cost above ten *sen*, and lends money on it. He will make advances on bedding, mosquito-nets, rice-tubs, iron kettles, paper umbrellas, brasiers, pails, clogs, sandals, plants in flower-pots—even cats and canaries have been known to be pawned, as well as *shai*, the wooden tablets on which the posthumous name of a dead person is written or carved. As, however, bedding, umbrellas, old kettles, &c., are not first-class security, pawnbrokers charge double and treble the usual interest on goods of that character. The Japanese government regulations recognise an interest of two and a half *sen* per *yen* a month (or two and a half farthings per two shillings); but there are few whose pledges reach the value of a *yen*, the customary values ranging from ten to fifty *sen*; and the rate of interest on these small loans often reaches eight per cent. a month—that is, within a fraction of cent. per cent. per annum.

The busiest financiers in the poor quarters of Tokio, next to the pawnbrokers, are the *hirashi*—lenders of money to be paid back in daily instalments. One can borrow one *yen* and repay three *sen* per day for forty days, or borrow eighty *sen* and repay two *sen* per day for fifty days. The rate of interest is, however, the same—that is, at

the rate of a hundred and eighty-two per cent. per annum. In addition to this, the borrower must pay the lender five *sen* for his trouble, and one *sen* for the stamp on the promissory note; so that, as in other countries and with larger amounts, the borrower never receives the full amount of his loan.

Such is a glimpse into the conditions of existence under which some tens of thousands pass their lives in Tokio. Nor is this destitution confined to the capital; for every large town in the kingdom, the open ports not excepted, can supply parallels closely approximating to the conditions prevailing in the principal city of the empire. At present the forces which, out of sheer desperation, make for disorder are comparatively quiescent in Japan, the strength to be found in combination not being realised. Mr Matsubara, however, looks forward to a time when the 'great hungry beast' that lurks in the secluded places of Tokio will learn its strength, and realise that 'it need no longer hunger and suffer to provide luxury and ease for its keepers. . . . Then,' he declares in a burst of passionate rhetoric, 'the unseen coils will begin to tighten, and the beast will find that it can crush, that the bars of the cage that confine it are mere stage property, painted paper to which it has given its face-value. Then a soul will be born unto the beast, a soul of passion whose fire will devour its rags and its filth, its very self, and the glorious, immortal soul that rises from the ashes will clothe itself with a new body of light that will give food and warmth to all alike; and the roar of the beast will become a song of thanksgiving and praise that will find a joyful echo in the

far corners of the land. As yet, however, the beast is blind—as blind as its keepers.'

This passage is characteristically Japanese—vague denunciation and spirited declamation, without a single practical suggestion. But the problem which these glimpses of life in Tokio disclose is one which the Japanese government will be compelled to face sooner or later. Already there are signs that the coolie class is beginning to understand its strength. For example, attacks are frequently made on rice-dealers who are believed to be keeping up the price of rice for speculative purposes; and the police, a handful of whom could a few years ago overawe a mob of a thousand, now find it increasingly difficult to preserve order or subdue a riot. A few weeks ago a mob completely wrecked the premises of a tobacconist in Tokio because some prizes he promised to those who purchased his cigarettes were not forthcoming; and the police were completely powerless, the riot lasting for several hours before it was quelled, and not a single man being arrested. It is estimated that there are at least sixty thousand powerful coolies in the capital of Japan who would at any time be ready to follow a leader who promised them an improvement of their condition, and to this number there must be added at least as many more of inferior physique who would be ready to assist. The Japanese government is at present occupied with problems of military expansion to the exclusion of almost everything else; but it is very certain that, unless some effort is made to grapple with the problem of poverty, Japan, in face of the new ideas and new aspirations which are being voiced in its press, has serious troubles looming ahead.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—OF THE FIGHT IN THE MOSS OF BIGGAR.



WHEN we came to the camping-place it was almost deserted. The people had all gone to the fair, and nothing was to be seen save the baggage and the children. The morning had grown wilder, and a thin snow was falling—the earnest of a storm. The mist was drawing closer and creeping over the boglands. I minded an old saying of Tam Todd's, 'Rouk's snaw's wraith,' and I looked for a wild storm with gladness, for it would keep the dragon gentry at home and prohibit their ill-doing.

But just in front, at the border of the fog and at the extremity of the dry land, the captain saw something which made him draw up his horse sharply and stare. Then he turned to Matthew, and I saw that his face was flushed. 'Ride a' your pith, man,' he said, 'ride like the

wind to the town, and bid our folk hurry back. Nae words, and be off.' And the obedient son galloped away to do his bidding.

He gripped me by the arm and pulled me to his side. 'Ye've guid een,' he says. 'D'ye see that ower by the laigh trees?'

I looked, and looked again, and saw nothing.

'Maybe no,' he said; 'ye ha'ena gipsy een; but in half-an'-oor we'll a' ken what it means. It's the Ruthvens wi' the Yerl o' Hell. I ken by their red-strippit breeks and their lang scythesticks. Ye mann ken that for lang we've had a bluid-fend wi' that clan, for the Baillies are aye gentrice, and ha'e nae trokins wi' sic blaggard tinklers. We've focht them yince and twice and aye gotten the better, and noo I hear that little Will Ruthven—that's him that they ca' the Yerl o' Hell for his deevilry—has sworn to fecht us till there's no' a Baillie left to keep up the

name. And noo they've come. Faith, there'll be guid bluid spilt afore they wratches learn their lesson.'

The news struck me with vast astonishment and a little dismay. I had often longed to see a battle, and now I was to be gratified. But what a battle!—a fight between two bloodthirsty gipsy clans, both as wild as peat-reek, and armed with no more becoming weapons than bludgeons, cutlasses, and scythe-blades. More, the event would place me in a hard position. I could not fight. It would be too absurd for words that I should be mixed up in their *mêlée*. But the man at my side expected me to aid him. I owed my life to him, and with these folk gratitude is reckoned one of the first of the virtues. To refuse William Baillie my help would be to offer him the deepest unkindness. Yet I dismissed the thought at once as preposterous. I could no more join in the fight than I could engage in a pothouse or stable brawl. There was nothing for it but to keep back and watch the thing as a silent spectator.

In a little I began to see the band. It would number, as I guessed, some hundred and ten, with women and children. The captain, as he looked, grew fierce with excitement. His dark eyes blazed, and his brow and cheeks were crimson. Ever and anon he looked anxiously in the direction of the town, waiting for the help which was to come. As the foe came nearer he began to point me out the leaders. 'There's Muckle Will,' he cried—'him wi' the lang bare shanks, like the trams o' a cairt. He's the strongest and langest man frae the Forth to Berwick. And there's Kennedy himself!—that sonsy licht-coloured man. They say he's the best wi' the sma'-sword in a' Nithsdale; but, faith, he has me to reckon wi' the day. And there's that bluidy de'il, Jean Ruthven, whae wad fecht ony man in braid Scotland for a pund o' 'oo. She's as guid as a man, and, they say, has been the death o' mair folk than the Yerl himself. But here come our ain men. Come on, Rob and Wat; and you, Mathy, gang wide to the richt wi' some. It's a great day *this*. Nae wee cock-fecht, but a muckle, lang, deidly battle.' And the man's face was filled with fierce joy.

Meanwhile both the forces had taken up their position opposing one another, and such a babel of tinker yells arose that I was deafened. Each side had their war-ery, and in addition the women and children screamed the most horrible curses and insults against the enemy. Yet the battle was not arrayed in haphazard fashion, but rather with some show of military skill. The stronger and bigger men of the clan, with the captain himself, were in the middle. On the right and left were their sons, with a more mixed force; and below all, the women were drawn up like harpies, looking well-nigh as fierce and formidable as the men.

'You'll come to the front wi' me, Maister Burnet,' said the captain. 'Ye're a guid man o' your hands, and we'll need a' we can get i' the middle.'

'No,' said I. 'I cannot.'

'Why?' he asked, looking at me darkly.

'Tut! this is mere foolery. You would not have me meddling in such a fray?'

'You think we're no' worthy for you to fecht wi', he said quietly—'we, that are as guid as the best gentlemen i' the laud, and have saved your life for ye, Master John Burnet? Weel, let it be. I didna think ye wad ha'e dune it.' Then the tinker blood came out. 'Maybe you're feared,' said he, with an ugly smile.

I turned away and made no answer; indeed, I could trust myself to make none. I was bitterly angry and unhappy. All my misfortunes had drawn to a point in that moment. I had lost everything. A fatal mischance seemed to pursue me. Now I had mortally offended the man who had saved my life, and my outlook was drear enough.

I had been looking the other way for a second, and when I turned again the fray had begun. The Earl, with a cutlass, had engaged the captain, and the wings, if one may call them by so fine a word, had met and mingled in confusion. But still, it was not a general *mêlée*, but rather a duel between the two principal combatants. The little man with the short sword showed wondrous agility, and leaped and twisted like a tumbler at a fair. As for Baillie, he had nought to do but keep him at a distance, for he was both better armed and better skilled. As he fought he let his eye wander to the others and directed them with his voice. 'Come up, Mathy lad,' he would ery. 'Stand weel into them, and dinna fear the lasses.' Then, as he saw one of his own side ereeping behind the Earl to strike a back blow, he roared with anger and bade them keep off. 'Let the man be,' he cried. 'Is't no' enough to ha'e to fecht wi' blaggards that ye mann be blaggards yourself?'

But in a little the crowd closed round them and they had less room for play. Then began a grim and deadly fight. The townspeople, at the word of the tinkers fighting, had left the fair and come out in a crowd to witness it. It was a sight such as a man may scarce see twice in his lifetime. The mist rolled low and thick, and in the dim light the wild, dark faces and whirling weapons seemed almost monstrous. Now that the death had begun there was little shouting; nothing was heard save the rattle of the cutlasses and a sort of sighing as blows were given and received.

At first the battle was fought in a little space, and both sides stood compact. But soon it widened, and the wings straggled out almost to the edge of the bog-water. The timid onlookers fled as from the plague, and I, in my station

in the back, was in doubts whether I should bide still or not. But in front of me were the girls and children, and I thought, if I could do nought else, I might bide still and see to them. For the horns of the Ruthvens' company (which was far the larger) threatened to enclose the Baillies and cut off their retreat. Meantime the mist had come down still closer, and had given that decent covering which one desires in a bloody fray. I could scarce see the front ranks of our opponents, and all I could make out of my friends was the captain's bright sword glinting as he raised it to the cut.

But that soon happened which I had feared; for the Ruthvens, enclosing our wings, had all but surrounded us, since the captain had put the weaker there and left all the more valiant for the centre. Almost before I knew I saw one and another great gipsy rush around and make towards the girls who had not joined the battle. In that moment I saw the bravest actions which it has ever been my lot to see; for these slim, dark-haired maids drew knives and stood before their assailants as stout-hearted as any soldiers of the king's guard. The children raised a great cry and huddled close to one another. One evil-looking fellow flung a knife and pierced a girl's arm. . . . It was too much for me. All my good resolutions went to the wind, and I forgot my pride in my anger. With a choking cry I drew my sword and rushed for him.

After that I know not well what happened. I was borne back by numbers; then I forced my way forward; then back I fell again. At first I fought calmly, and more from a perverted feeling of duty than any lust of battle. Then I saw all around me a crowd of fierce faces and

gleaming knives, and I remember nought save that I hurled myself onward sword in hand, hewing and slashing like a madman. The wild moss-trooping blood which I had heired from generations of robber lords stood me in good stead. A reckless joy of fight took me. I must have seemed more frantic than the gipsies themselves.

At last, I know not how, I found my way to the very front rank. I had been down often, and blood was flowing freely from little flesh-wounds, but as yet I was unscathed. There I saw William Baillie laying about him manfully, though sore wounded in the shoulder. When he saw me he gave me a cry of welcome. 'Come on,' he cried; 'I kenned ye wad think better o't. We've mucklo need o' a guid man the noo.' And he spoke truth, for anything more fierce and awesome than the enemy I have never seen. The Earl of Hell, a great, fair-haired man, who, with no weapon but a broken cutlass, had cleared all around him, I strove to engage alone. I thrust at him once and again, and could get no nearer for the swing of his mighty arms. Then the press behind, caused, I suppose, by the Ruthvens at the back, drove me forward, and there was nothing for it but to grapple with him. Our weapons were forced from our hands in the throng, and with desperate energy we clutched one another. I leaped and gripped him by the neck; and the next instant we were both down, and a great suffocating wave of men pressed over us. I felt my breath stop, and yet I kept my grip and drew him closer. All was blackness around, and even as I clutched I felt a sharp thrill of agony through my frame, which seemed to tear the life from my heart; and I was lost to all.

FILM PHOTOGRAPHY.

By T. C. HEPWORTH.



IN every art, if we endeavour to trace its history, we find certain improvements introduced at different times, each of which marks an important forward step, sometimes amounting to quite a revolution in practice. Certainly is this the case in the art of photography, which has during the past sixty years advanced with such leaps and bounds that the pioneer workers would hardly recognise, in the modern method of picture-making, anything pertaining to the practice of camera work as introduced by Daguerre and his partner Niépce in 1837. Those first pictures, called daguerreotypes, of which examples are seen occasionally in the possession of elder folk, were taken on silvered plates, the surface exposed to the action of the

light in the camera serving for the actual and only picture—negative and positive in one. Multiplication was impossible, unless by extra sittings before the camera; and as those sittings had, by reason of the slowness of the action of the chemicals, to be prolonged to a most extraordinary extent, repetition was a matter which needed consideration.

For fourteen years the daguerreotype—which, it must be admitted, gave delicate and beautiful results—held its own, when it was entirely superseded by the wet-collodion method. In this process a negative on glass was produced in the camera, and from that negative any number of positive copies on paper could be obtained. Portraits by the dozen then became a feature of the photographer's business, and many men made small

fortunes at taking pictures by the new method. Thirty years elapse, and the wet process—except for special purposes—was overthrown in favour of dry plates—that is to say, glass plates covered with a compound sensitive to light, composed of the necessary silver salts suspended in gelatine. The manufacture of these plates now forms a big industry, and there are many factories all over the country which supply them to photographers, professional as well as amateur.

It has long been acknowledged that glass is not the ideal substance for the support of the photographic image. In the first place, it is terribly brittle, and many are the valuable negatives which have testified to the fact; and, in the next place, it is heavy—two grave faults in a substance which has to go through much handling and carriage from one place to another. On the other hand, it can be readily cleaned from every impurity—an important point when we have delicate chemicals to deal with; and—what is of more moment to a photographer—it is beautifully smooth, flat, and transparent. The latter quality is more important than all, because in the operation of printing from a negative the light has to go through its more transparent portions, and unless the support itself was penetrable by light it would be useless for the purpose. Paper and other substances have been tried as substitutes for glass for negative-making, but have never come into general use. So that we may say that glass, with its undoubted imperfections with regard to weight and brittleness, has been regarded, until recently, as the best substance which photography could adopt as a support for negative images. And for the use of professional photographers in the studio, where weight need not be a matter of consideration, and where practised fingers give little opportunity for breakage, it is still the best material, and likely to remain so for a long time to come.

But with the amateur worker it is very different. Few travellers make their way along untrodden paths without taking with them a witness of their doings in the shape of a photographic camera. Every ounce of extra weight is with them a serious matter, especially in mountainous countries, and few could burden themselves with the necessary apparatus for taking pictures if it included several pounds' weight of glass. Happily, glass plates can now be dispensed with, and celluloid films, little thicker than the paper upon which these words are printed, take their place. The two most valuable properties of celluloid as a support for the photographic image are its lightness and its flexibility. Comparing it with glass plates of the usual thickness adopted by photographers, we soon see how it is that tourists, who naturally wish to reduce their impedimenta to the narrowest limits, give it the preference. Taking a packet of a dozen plates measuring 5 by 4 inches, we find that they turn the scale at 22½ ounces, nearly; whereas a strip of celluloid to

bear twelve pictures of precisely the same size weighs only 2½ ounces. A tourist going abroad for, say, a fortnight will want at least a gross of plates, or their equivalent in films; in the former case he will have a burden of more than ten pounds and a half, while the films necessary for taking the same number of pictures will weigh only one-fifth of that amount.

The other property of celluloid—its flexibility—has had almost as much to do with its adoption by photographers as its light weight, and has to a great extent revolutionised the form of photographic apparatus. The common kind of camera, until recently, was a box with an accordion-like bellows extension, so that it could be opened out for the purpose of focussing the picture. The sensitive glass plates were held in separate wooden cases, called double-backs, two plates in each, which were made to slide into the camera at the back, and the drawing of a shutter in front of the case exposed the plate within to the action of the lens. It was usual for each camera to be sold with three of these double backs, holding altogether six plates; and when these plates had been exposed to the lens the operator could do no more work until, under the protection of red light, he had removed them and put fresh plates in their places. Now, compare this somewhat crude method of procedure with the more modern system, which the introduction of celluloid has made possible. The glass plates are abolished, and with them their containing cases or double-backs. In their stead the photographer carries a roll of celluloid film long enough to accommodate a dozen pictures. This celluloid ribbon is held on a reel or spool, and backed by black paper throughout its length. The ribbon of paper is prolonged for several inches beyond the celluloid ribbon with which it is associated, so that if we were to unroll one of these spools we should see nothing but black paper to begin with. The reason for this arrangement is that the spool can be placed in the camera or removed from it in full daylight, so that the operator can change a used spool for a fresh one without having recourse to a dark room—that is to say, having taken twelve pictures, he can change his spool and start afresh with material for twelve more, and twelve again after that should he see fit, provided that he has the necessary 'refills' in his pocket.

And now a word about the mechanism by which this ribbon of celluloid, made sensitive to light, is made to show itself to the lens in successive sections. As we have seen, the strip of celluloid is held on a reel or spool in association with a ribbon of black paper which projects far beyond the celluloid. This black paper is figured on the back—at equal intervals—1, 2, 3, 4, &c.; and the figures can be read through a tiny red window let into the back of the camera when the spool has been put in.

its place. This is easily done by removing part of the instrument, when the fastening of the black paper on the spool is cut through and the paper drawn out, so that it passes over guiding-rods, and finally to a receiving-spool, which has in connection with it a winch by which it can be turned, the handle of which is outside the camera. Supposing, then, that we have put the spool in position, we close the camera, turn the winch-handle until we see the figure 1 through the little red window, and then we shall know that all is in readiness for taking our first picture. We present the camera towards the desired object, press the button, and an audible click tells us that the picture has been taken. We then, for precaution's sake, make a note of the subject, time of day, quality of the light, or any other matter which may be of value for future reference, turn the winch-handle until the figure 2 makes its appearance behind the little red window, and we are then ready for a second shot.

It will thus be seen that this modern form of camera consists of a box containing two rollers, between which a ribbon of sensitive material can be passed, after the fashion of a panorama. Each section of this ribbon comes in turn under the influence of the lens in front of it, and is impressed by light action so as to produce an embryo negative image. A wonderful amount of ingenuity has been expended in simplifying the many details of this system of photography; and the instrument itself, under the name 'kodak,' is really a triumph of mechanical skill.

Not the least useful feature of film photography is that the sensitive material can be sent through the post without the least risk of injury, so that the tourist photographer, so long as he keeps in touch with civilisation, need only carry with him sufficient material for a few days' consumption. A telegram to the nearest town will quickly bring him another spool or two of film, and he can again go on his way rejoicing. It must be noted, too, that the traveller can send his exposed films, by the same medium, to his dealers, who will undertake the development and the printing of pictures from them. To the busy man—the war correspondent of a newspaper, for example—this is a boon indeed.

Celluloid—a mixture of camphor and gun-cotton, with some suitable solvent—was invented many years ago, and, as a substitute for ivory—in this case mixed with a white pigment—has been used for billiard-balls, combs, knife and fork handles, washable collars and cuffs, and many other purposes. It was, indeed, proposed as a substitute for the brittle glass plates employed in photography thirty years ago, and it would no doubt have come into use had it not been found that the collodion then used as a support for the image acted upon the new material. Now, however, that collodion plates have been almost entirely superseded by those coated with a gelatine

emulsion, celluloid has once more come to the fore, and careful experiment has produced a material which, whilst being as clear as glass, is flexible and about one-fifth its weight. The chemicals used in photography have no effect upon the material, so that, while the thin, transparent kind of celluloid is used as an image-bearer, a thicker and opaque kind is employed for making dishes in which the film can be developed.

A word about this development. As is well known, the photographic plate or film which has been exposed to light action bears no visible record of the circumstance. The alteration which has been effected does not reveal itself until a developing liquid has been applied to the surface, an operation which must be conducted in a room lighted only by a ruby window or lamp with a red glass. This developer, which can be procured in the form of powder, to be mixed with a stated quantity of water, is poured into a basin, and the ribbon of exposed celluloid, removed from its spool, is drawn through it backwards and forwards. Presently the image appears—or perhaps it would be more correct to speak of them in the plural, for at least twelve little negatives will be found on the ribbon. These images gradually get more pronounced, and the developing fluid is allowed to act until they seem to be almost too black for recognition. The film is subsequently fixed, washed, and dried, and the negative pictures can then be separated from one another with scissors, and can be printed from by any photographic method which may be preferred. It would be beyond our purpose to give details of operations which can be found in any text-book, and are generally supplied by dealers in photographic materials.

And let it be observed that the photographic tyro should carefully study a text-book if he aims at doing good work. He would also do well, if he has no knowledge of drawing or pictorial composition, to turn his attention in that direction as well. There are thousands of amateur photographers who turn out good work, so far as technical excellence is concerned, and yet they seldom produce a satisfactory picture for want of artistic knowledge and feeling. One must learn how to recognise that happy conjunction of subject and light and shade which goes to make up a picture, and not to be led away by the charm of colour—which in photography has unfortunately to be neglected. The optician, the mechanic, and the chemist have combined to furnish us with photographic apparatus which has been brought to a wonderful pitch of perfection, but it will not work automatically. And although we have only to press a button to put the wonderful machine into action, we must learn when to press it, and take care that the subjects presented to its notice are such as will make *pictures* as well as photographs.

THE CURSE OF MUNGI.

CHAPTER II.

I'LL be home by dark, Daddymy.' It was seldom the old pet-name that as a baby she had given her father rose to Hannah's lips; but when it did she spoke it like all her words, unstudiedly. McCunn watched her as she touched the horse with her heel and ambled away from the veranda, she and her beloved grey, from her broad forehead to his dainty hoofs a single-minded pair in wholesome liteness. The old squatter rubbed his grizzled mat of hair and uttered a world of meaning, wherein, however, a grudging pride was uppermost, in a single 'Hech!' as the girl disappeared amongst the low sandalwoods, leaving a trail of saffron-coloured dust behind her.

She rode, with her saddle, a round ten stone and a half, and stood in her stockinged feet clear five feet seven of ripe, sweet-breathing womanhood.

Hannah was the pride and the despair of the district—the pride, because she was born a horse-woman and bred a pattern housewife, and because the look of her face and the sound of her voice were like shade and cool streams in a thirst-ridden land; the despair, because she seemed to those who sought her love as unapproachable as if they had hoped, by reaching out a hand, to touch the horizon. And yet it was not that she was remote from the common things; for every one that knew her claimed her as a comrade, and, utterly regardless of age or sex, she flew to those in trouble. She never retaliated upon a slight, for none was ever offered to her; her silence was a reproach, and the look in her eyes a reproof that killed discourtesy before its utterance; at sight of her the meaner passions slunk away and hid themselves. She was of the women who stand in moral stature shoulder-high above the walls of caste: the burden of woman's purity, that is so hot and heavy a load sometimes, is carried by such as Hannah McCunn as lightly as the warm health in their limbs and the crown of hair upon their heads.

The yellow sun cast a lengthening shadow before her that stretched and shrank grotesquely on the dusty track as the grey went at a free canter to the eastward. The warm air singing in her ears, the free movement, and the wide earth about her conspired together to set her in tune with her conditions, and to reduce the memory of her father's bitterness to the dimensions of the lesser things that must be borne, and might be cured, with patience.

Before the grey had put a mile of road between her and the Crannoch homestead Hannah was singing to herself in large, sweet chest-tones an impromptu melody set to the rhythm of the horse's hoof-beats. It was her way—unknown to any one, since she herself was unaware of it, and only sang

to solitude—to set to music in her throat the things unutterable on her tongue. Speech was denied her on any but tangible things; though a wandering man of letters who had drifted through Crannoch once vowed there was more poetry, if less verse, in her remarks about a batch of yeast-bread or the milkers' calves than lay bound in books beneath the roof of the British Museum. This man was very sick, however, and in search of peace from the cough that racked him day and night. He found his peace soon after, on a western cattle-run, beneath six feet of black soil. These mellow improvisations of Hannah's fitted, as air fits the body, the something finer than a thought that was in her as she sang them. It was her way to breathe them out at odd moments: it might be of a winter's night when the woeful cry of a wild dog rose into the unfathomable stillness; or when from the milking-yard of a morning she watched the last of the stars fade into the blue, and the highest tree-top kindle into tawny gold as it spied the sun; or maybe in the splendour of evening, when she was alone in the house, as she shaded her eyes with a hand and looked along the track that came winding out of the east, up from the sea, for a horseman, a stranger.

Thus she rode now, suiting the idle notions that rose in her now and again to her murmured cadences. She was in the middle of a dirge-like strain of lament for the drought-stricken earth about her, and of pity for the wasting herds upon it, when the track she rode upon rounded out of a clump of timber, and the ruined paddock-fence and fireless, gaping, lost-looking homestead of Mungi lay before her. She drew rein and stopped her singing; the grey stood up dead still and made a shuddering sound in his nostrils. 'There's a blight upon the place,' the words of her father rose to mind, and suddenly fear knocked at the girl's heart, for surely the place looked bleak and stricken, with its gapped fences, its house-door sagging on parted hinges, its broken roof-tree, and its dark window-openings staring like dead eyes out of the bleached walls.

The grey began to lift his feet in quick time as if the earth burned him, and made to swerve away and gallop a mile of earth between himself and the unholy ground of Mungi. But the eyes of the girl clung to the forsaken house, and she held the horse's head towards it. She knew as little why she stayed as what had brought her there alone; but she made the horse face it as though in compelling him she thus conquered her own unworthy fear that had spread to him.

As she sat, the lower half of the open doorway was hidden from her by a bush; and, driven by some impulse of curious dread, she worked the unwilling horse along the outside of the broken fence.

The grey plunged and tore fiercely at the bit; and, as the impeding bush slid away, he flung himself round in defiance of Hannah's strong hands upon the bridle, and stood, facing from the house, shaking in every nerve, and with the sweat oozing out and staining his white shoulder. For one moment Hannah was helpless, and her heart stood still in her body; for, as the horse had swung about, she had seen from the corner of an eye that the doorway was not empty; there was Something on the threshold; and at that instant, too, the sound of a voice had reached her ears: it came from amongst the deserted walls.

The cry was repeated, and the horse made to bolt from it; but Hannah held him now, for at the repetition of the sound the woman in her had risen up, stronger than fear, to answer it. It was the voice of a creature in distress. She jumped to the ground, pulled the horse about, and hitched the bridle over a post in the fence. She knew her grey from foalhood, and was aware that, though twenty thousand red-hot steam-rollers should thunder past him, he was too much of a gentleman to run back and break his bridle. Then she rubbed his nose for his comfort and her own, and stepped through a gap in the fence, and went steadily up to the house.

The body of a man was on the threshold of Mungi, and once—just once—the girl's knees gave beneath her when, as she drew nearer, she saw about the throat streaks and splotches of crimson. The body lay with the head inside the door; one leg was stretched out and the other updrawn. It was thus, she knew, that twenty years ago poor Baynton's corpse had been found: it was just such a Thing as this, lying just there and just so, that on many a night in her childhood and since had made horror in her dreams. But nevertheless big-hearted Hannah, though for an instant the tree-tops swam before her, went on unflinching.

It was the body of a young man who was quietly sleeping that lay in the doorway of Mungi. The red about his neck was owing to the colour that was stamped upon an enormous new cotton handkerchief that lay loosely across his throat. Hannah lifted it gently; and, letting it hang from her fingers, she looked down at the unconscious figure, that half-covered, as it lay, a faint, black, ragged stain upon the boards beneath it.

It was believed in the neighbourhood, with the devoutness of credulity that is lavished only upon the things that are not, that on certain nights between moonrise and morning the uneasy spirit of Baynton was to be seen drawing water from the creek and toiling in a cold, ineffectual fury to wipe out that dim stain. Hannah remembered at once the restless ghost and the wailing cry that had come to her from this sleeper on the blood-stained floor, and reached out trembling fingers to wake him. As she stooped the sleeper's head rolled, and again that curious sound came

from between his lips. Hearing it thus at close quarters, the girl withdrew her hand, and sitting down very softly beside the sleeping man, she devoted herself to keeping off the flies from his arms and face with the gigantic cotton handkerchief, while now and then deep, noiseless laughter welled up in her throat.

It was a long-drawn 'Damn!' with a falling, mild inflection to it which entirely robbed it of all offensiveness to the girl's ears, that had been uttered by the sleeper, and had moved Hannah to sit down beside him with her fears for the hideous disturbance of his slumbers suddenly withdrawn.

He was clean-shaven and short-haired, and his long, lean, shapely body and limbs were hidden in a bulgy, unwrinkled broad-checked flannel shirt and milk-white moleskin trousers fresh from the store. The clothing, in its extravagant newness, proclaimed aloud to Hannah precisely what it was put on to hide. She knew this for a city-bred Englishman who had somehow broken down hopelessly in his first new-chum endeavour to pass himself off, to himself, as the tried bush-hand; and it seemed possible that, from the borders of dreamland, he was railing in a gentlemanly way at some humiliation that had befallen him.

The spasms of laughter in Hannah's throat died down, giving place to a slower, deeper movement as her eyes wandered over the stranger's face and neck, so very crimson where the sun had touched them, so fine and fresh-looking elsewhere, and over his sinewy, long-fingered hands that lay at his side with their soft palms uppermost, and showing a big blister where the bridle had chafed the left forefinger. Having chased away the flies, she sank her chin in the palm of her hand that held the stranger's handkerchief, and with closed lips broke softly into a new and unpremeditated melody as she looked across the deserted paddock.

She turned her head presently, so that cheek and temple were supported in her hand, to find the stranger, who had not moved, looking dreamily at her face. She returned his look without moving, during a pause that seemed to her not measurable by time.

'Please go on,' he said.

'Go on where?' she asked in her big chest-notes, and soothingly, in the manner of a nurse to a patient. 'Home?'

'No, no, no; go on singing.'

'But I wasn't singing.'

'Oh, I say, I may look like a bushman'—Hannah moaned slightly—'but if you weren't humming a sort of *pot-pourri*—though I hate the word—of *Warum*—Schumann's, you know, with a dash of Chopin at his dreamiest thrown in—may I—may I never tell the difference between major and minor any more.'

Hannah remembered the scorching afternoon sun, and concluded it had set his mind wandering;

but she was a born tender of the sick, and she preserved her calmness unstirred except by pity. 'Perhaps you're right,' she said submissively. She had received the impression, nevertheless, that his remarks had been compounded of a somewhat delirious mixture in which she had detected the name of a distant township called Taroom, a babble of foreign tongues, and a hint of cookery recipes.

He drew in his straightened leg, wineing and groaning slightly as he did so, and sat up clasping his slim fingers about his knees, and bringing his long, nervous, sun-branded face within a foot of her own. 'Well,' he said deferentially but firmly, 'I do claim to know a little about these things; and when I get my piano in here—he rolled his head comprehensively backward towards the long-forsaken rooms, and Hannah pitied him from her soul—I hope you'll let me show that I do.'

To big-hearted Hannah that clinched the matter. This poor soul needed her care; and where that was needed she gave of it, putting away all thought of other things, full measure. 'Indeed I will that, when the piano comes,' she said; and with a deft movement she put her hands about his neck and knotted the wonderful handkerchief round his throat.

The young man looked down amazed at the long, cool hands at his neck, and as the girl's breath at the same time spread fresh and warm over his face, his own hands rose up as if to lay hold of hers. Before he had touched them, however, he looked into her eyes, and as he did so his fingers quietly settled themselves out again on the floor behind him, supporting him where he sat.

Hannah gently pressed the knotted handkerchief into its place at his throat, and folding her fingers in her lap, proceeded to take pitying charge of him.

'Tell me,' she said, 'where do you come from?'

'Dundoor,' he answered, his voice flat with wonder.

She was sure now that his wits were sun-muddled. 'Dear, dear,' she said, with an all-enfolding sympathy in her eyes, 'from ten miles away. Look there. And where's your swag?'

'My?'

'You're new come out, I can see; and you're on the wallaby, I expect. Where have you left your drum?' (that is, swag: roll of blanket).

He throttled a shout of delighted laughter, and answered with deep solemnity: 'It is my first season; you are quite right there. But I'm not after big game. As for the drum, I never rose above fiddle and piano in the executive branches of the art.'

She sounded a melodious 'Ah!' above her bewilderment at his wanderings. But she persevered. 'Come,' she said, with a shade of peremptoriness, 'look at the long shadows of the

timber; it's near sundown; I hear the jackasses. Where are your blankets?' She tried to gather her steady eyebrows into a frown.

'I have none,' he said abjectly. 'As for the donkey'—

'Maybe they're nearer than you think,' she cut in, now firmly set in her benevolent despotism. 'And your tucker, and billy, and things?'

'For such essentials I have to rely for the present upon financially invoking the hospitality of Dundoor caravansaries.'

'And where do you expect to camp to-night?'

'The words "My rest a-log" occurred to me with peculiar force.'

'Nay.' She put an arm round his neck and patted him softly between the shoulders. He looked suddenly frail and tired, she thought, and her eyes dimmed in response to a dewiness in his. She caught one of his hands and stood up. 'Listen to me,' she said firmly, and shook the hand with a tender decisiveness.

'For ever and ever, if you like,' he said dreamily, leaning his head contentedly against the doorpost.

'Do you remember how you left Dundoor?'

'Oh, perfectly. Half the town turned out to see me off—I don't know why, unless it was that I tried to get up on the right-hand side of the horse, and failed signally.'

'The horse?'

'Yes. A thing the colour of weak treacle, the bally brute!'

'A yellow bay, maybe,' she corrected gently; 'and bawley, not bally.'

'Oh!'

'And where is he now?'

'Well, judging from his pace during the last sight I had of him—he looked upside down, by the way—I should say he's about fifty miles off, unless somebody's stopped him.'

'Fifty m—Upside down?' she said slowly.

'Of course that's only a rough statement. And I was standing on my head at the time, you see.'

'He slung you? Where?'

'Slung? Oh, ay. Here, at the back door. Yes. He seemed to smell something queer about this place; and I got out along his neck—it was rash of me, I admit—to see what it was, and to reason with him, if possible, when he—well, he seemed to dissolve from beneath me in the manner of an earthquake, and I—To be quite frank, after that inverted impression of him, I don't seem to remember much till—till you came.'

She had knelt down beside him. 'Dear, d-e-a-r,' she murmured again, and laid a hand on his knee. 'Now, why didn't you tell me that at first? And are you hurt, poor lad?'

'I—a—didn't seem to want to hurry the interview. And I'm not hurt, only stiff. I'm sure; yes, quite certain.' He dwelt upon the last words, stroking her hand on his knee for emphasis.

'Well, we'll see,' she said, taking final charge

of the situation. 'Dundoor's ten, and my home's only five miles. You're coming with me.'

His readiness forsook him, and he stammered something inaudible, to which she paid no heed.

'It's likely enough,' she said, getting up and fixing at her hat and hair for the journey, 'that you've heard of me in Dundoor. Maybe you know my name?'

He looked elaborately puzzled. 'Possibly I have.' He gazed profoundly up at her, then brightened. 'To be sure; it's Juno.'

She was coiling up a long, loose strand of hair that had become half-unfastened, and had two hair-pins between her perfect teeth. She looked down at him and shook her head.

He watched the nimble fingers intently. 'Of course not. It's Diana.'

'There,' she said triumphantly, patting the hair into its place. 'I knew you'd heard it. That's very near. It's Hannah.'

'To be sure, it's Hannah.'

'Now, Hannah—what?'

'Hannah—Han-n-ah'—

'Hannah M'—M'—'

'Of course, Hannah M'Joy.'

'No.'

'Hannah M'Peace.'

'No.'

'Hannah M'Lo'— He coughed. 'Hannah M'Sm.'

'Or the next thing—Hannah M'Cunn. You couldn't be long in Dundoor without hearing of Donald M'Cunn of Crannoch. Now we're ready. Come along.' She held out a hand to help him to rise.

He appeared to be smitten with a sudden weariness and pain, and neglecting the hand, he dragged himself to his feet by clinging to the doorpost, groaning a little.

'The poor body,' she moaned. 'Are you that sore? Here;' and she passed a strong, soft arm about him. 'Oh, I can bear the weight of you,' as he leant away from her and hobbled towards the veranda-edge.

'I am only stiff from lying down. I was—ah!—thinking that perhaps your—your'—

'My what?'

'The—owner of Crannoch—might be surprised if I came—uninvited'—

'Is it my father? Donald M'Cunn?' and stalwart Hannah braced her arm against the weight that suddenly descended upon it. 'Ah! you'll have heard he's a hard man, maybe. He's no' that hard. And if he's the master of Crannoch, why, I'm—I'm Hannah M'Cunn.' And jumping down herself, she fairly lifted the slim stranger off the high veranda and set him on the ground beside her.

The grey woke out of a dose and nickered to his mistress as she came slowly towards him, supporting the young man. 'You'll have to ride side-saddle,' she said, with the reins looped on the grey's neck, and holding the stirrup. 'Up with you. I'll lead him.'

The stranger drew back alertly, considering how he had leant upon Hannah just now. 'Oh no, please. And leave you to walk?'

Hannah had already her doubts as to what extent, if any, his intelligence was impaired by the sun; but, as nurse and doctor, she felt that she was still supreme. 'Come,' she said, 'here beside me;' and he went. 'Pat your hand on the mane, by mine, and face the horse. That's it. Lift your foot—no—no'—she gave her deep-bosomed laugh and showed her magnificent teeth—the other one. Now, on "three"—jump.' And the injured man found himself in the saddle, clutching wildly at the horns. She settled him there, and led off the obedient grey.

The twilight had fallen suddenly about them, still and warm, softening the harshness of the arid earth and the naked stiffness of the trees. The young man looked amazedly round and behind him as he was led away. The empty house seemed swallowed by its overarching woods, and he fixed his eyes on the girl's back as she swung vigorously along the dim road, going level with the horse's head.

HOME-LIFE AND THE MICROSCOPE.



IT is one of those dreary London days, when the eyes smart and burn with the nauseous yellow fog, and the steady, drizzling rain seems to soak into one's very heart. There is a myth fondly

cherished on Parisian boulevards that on such days the Englishman goes out to murder his mother-in-law, or to commit suicide, or both.

Hurrying home along one of the west-end streets, I came upon a crowd of about four hundred people standing patiently in the fog, tightly packed together, with the drizzle soaking

steadily into the compact mass. They were waiting for the doors of a music-hall to open; waiting in all this discomfort—for what?

The fog and the rain were enough to make the most cheerfully disposed gloomy; but there was something more doleful than fog and rain in this wet, steaming crowd. It seemed to me, a humble student of the world around me, a saddening fact that so many men and women in fairly good circumstances should be so poverty-stricken in the power to amuse themselves in their own homes that they were content to endure so much discomfort in order to enjoy a

little forgetfulness of the cares and trials of life. It has been for some years past clear to me that one of the greatest lessons the average Englishman has to learn is how to amuse himself. The moment John Bull leaves off work in the office, the mart, or the workshop, he either has to get some one to amuse him, or he loafs, grumbles, worries, or gets into mischief.

The saddest thing of all in this want of resourcefulness in the art of amusement is its influence on home-life. When the habit of seeking the pleasures of life outside the home is once contracted, home ceases to exist; it is transformed into a mere eating and sleeping place. The incapacity to amuse one's self and the craving to be amused by others create a sort of drunkenness that leads men and women into living unnatural and unwholesome lives of feverish excitement, unrest, and *ennui*. Happy indeed is the home where husband, wife, and children find the greatest pleasures of life within its four walls. Unfortunately there are only too many of our fellow-creatures to whom home is a hollow mockery; but, in pleading that home should be made the hub of the universe, and not a mere refectory and dormitory, I am thinking of those who have homes that might be made the centre of life's pleasures, but who do not seem to possess the art of accomplishing this.

One of the surest means of bringing real happiness into one's own life and the lives of others is to foster some hobby that can be carried on in the home. Here, in this little room that we call my 'den,' how many happy hours have we spent! Against the walls are some shelves of books that it would be gross flattery to call a library; but how we have enjoyed reading them, and how useful they are to refer to! Free public libraries are excellent things; but, oh, the joy, the comfort, and delight of having a few books always within reach, one's very own; each with its own romance of capture from an unlikely bookstall and triumphant carriage home! All around is a queer medley of things, and hidden in this cupboard behind me are a hundred delights in glass bottles, dishes, and trays. Everything in this room is in that perfect state of untidiness and disorder in which one knows exactly where to pounce upon anything that one wants. They have 'a clear-up' here sometimes, with the most awful results—an orderly chaos wherein nothing can be found.

As I was rather depressed by the fog, the rain, and that crowd of damp people, I thought we would come up here and gaze into the beautiful scenery of that hidden world which has so many times thrilled us and humbled us with its strange glories. Reverently I unlock the cabinet, and with tender, gentle hands take the microscope from its nest and place it upon the table. It is not a costly instrument. I purchased

it second-hand from an honest dealer whom I have cause to bless. Many working-men whom I know could purchase a similar instrument if they refrained from 'backing all the winners' for six months. I have always found that the highest pleasures of life are the least expensive. In a public park, within a stone's-throw of this house, when the shadows lengthen and the public-houses begin to fill, you can hear the thrushes singing for nothing—there is not even a collection—although, as a religious service, I know few things to equal the even-song of these Cockney thrushes.

But the microscope is on the table. Some people spend fancy sums of money on specially-made, elaborate microscopic lamps. I use an ordinary little paraffin lamp, which also does service in my dark-room lantern—for know that on occasion I am guilty of taking photographs of my beloved Dame Nature, as well as looking at her through an artfully constructed series of lenses which reveal to our eyes many of her marvellous secrets. The lamp is lighted; the microscope is in position; the little mirror is adjusted so that the 'field' is well illuminated. I have attached the polariscope, because I want to show Joan (that is my three-quarters) and Doodles (that is our offspring) some examples of crystallisation which they have never yet seen.

Here, on the mantelshelf, are some watch-glasses turned coneave side uppermost. I place in this first watch-glass a few feathery flakes of pyrogallie acid and cover them with a little water. The 'pyro' is quickly dissolved, and I now take up a tiny drop of the water on the head of a domestic pin and transfer the drop to a slip of warm glass, which I place on the stage of the microscope.

For a minute or two I am engaged in getting the drop of water into its proper place, immediately under the objective—a somewhat formidable word, but merely the name of the lens nearest to the object under examination. I fix my right eye to the eyepiece, but can see nothing but a bright disc of light. I move the glass slip on the stage, first to the right, then to the left, then up and down; suddenly the bright disc of light is darkened. The drop of water has come between the ray of light from the mirror and the objective. Gently I push down the focussing-tube until I can plainly see the drop of water; then, by turning the screw of the fine adjustment, I make the drop still more plainly visible. A slight touch of the glass slip and I have brought the edge of the drop just within the field.

Joan now takes the chair and looks down the tube. 'Now, tell me what you see,' I say, with the self-complacent air of a millionaire who asks his visitor for a candid opinion upon a glass of the finest wine in his cellar.

Joan glances up at me reproachfully. 'Why,

there's nothing there!' she exclaims in an injured tone.

'Oh, isn't there?' I reply loftily. 'You look again. Watch that thin shadow by the bright streak on the left.'

I have scarcely uttered the words when a prolonged 'Oh!' bursts from Joan's lips.

'Ah!' I exclaim, with a chuckle. 'I thought you couldn't see anything! What is it like now—tell me?'

'Oh, don't speak to me, Darby dear! Do let me enjoy it!'

That's the worst of Joan. She always behaves on these occasions like the children at a magic-lantern entertainment. Not until some hours afterwards can you obtain from her an intelligent account of what she has seen. When she and Doddles have satisfied themselves, I again take a drop from the watch-glass and place it in position.

I look into the microscope, and see there a disc of light, with a brilliant line along the left-hand side. This line is the edge of the drop of water; all the other part of the disc is covered by the drop. Presently I see some tiny bronze spikes jutting out from one point at the edge; these gradually, as they grow every moment larger, assume the form of feathers, spreading out from the central point of their birth like a fan. But what a gorgeous fan it is! Queen Mab herself might cherish it as the most precious gem in her trousseau; with such a thing of beauty Titania might have cooled the brow of the translated Bottom. No Eastern artist or handicraftsman ever conceived a combination of colour so brilliant, so dazzling, and yet so harmonious and fascinating. The feathers forming this fan of Nature's own making are composed of myriads of fine filaments, luminous as the wings of fireflies. The infinite variety of colours is beyond description. In vain I try to count them. After noting gold, bronze, purple, emerald-green, silver, violet, carmine, amethyst, brown, orange, I give up the attempt in despair. Before this particular fan has completed its growth, other fans commence forming from different points all round the edge of the drop; the serrated edges, as they approach one another, send out spear-like shoots, which eventually glide side by side like miniature glaciers, until in another minute the whole of the drop is covered.

Here, in another watch-glass, I have dissolved a tiny morsel of nitrate of uranium. I place a drop of the water upon a warmed glass-slide, and examine it through the microscope. This time there are no feathery, fan-like shapes; the molecules form into crystals in quite a different manner from that of the molecules of the pyrogallie acid. The first sign of crystallisation is a dark speck in the centre of the drop; slowly around this speck the molecules begin to cluster as the water evaporates, forming themselves into beautiful silver

fern-leaves, some having an emerald-green sheen along their centres. Some of the leaves form along stems; some cluster together in the shape of star-fish; others take geometric forms in squares and angles, as though some Lilliputian human fingers had arranged them. At various parts of the drop the crystals are forming in strange key-like shapes of gold, bronze, and mother-of-pearl. The colours are so brilliant that the eye is at last fatigued, and regretfully I leave the view.

Doddles undertakes the part of observer. He kneels in my lap, places his eye at the eyepiece, and, as usual, proceeds to romance. One always has to allow a considerable personal equation for Doddles. At seven years of age the imagination is liable to run riot, and the marvellous things that Doddles sees in the microscope would supply Mr Andrew Lang with materials for many a fairy-tale to fit fairy books of any colour.

From the shelf where I keep my photographic chemicals I take down a little bottle of bromide of ammonium, dissolve a few grains of the white powder in a little water, and then place a pin-drop under the objective. In this instance crystallisation seems to take place much more rapidly. Little spikes appear all round the edge of the drop, pointing towards the centre; they are the tips of long, narrow silver fern-leaves with perfectly straight stems. The whole of the drop is soon covered with this lovely network, each frond sparkling like a diamond; but unfortunately its beauty is of short duration. The light, symmetrical forms become heavy and clumsy-looking, many of the fronds break off, the brilliancy dies away like a fading sunset, and the final formation is dull and leaden. Sometimes this particular salt crystallises in quite a startling manner. I have seen first one long, straight leaf form along the top of the drop, then one on each side, and then one at the bottom, forming a perfect rectangle; then another rectangle formed in the same way within the first, then another within the second, and so on until the whole space was filled up.

It would take many long evenings to exhaust the pleasures to be derived from even such a small stock of salts as I happen to possess. No one who has not observed this marvellous process of crystallisation can imagine what a fascinating study it is. Why do so many crystals assume these graceful, leaf-like forms? If all this loveliness is contained in one tiny drop of water not larger than a small pin-head, how small a part can we ever know of the inconceivable abundance of Nature's hidden beauties! All these fairy-like scenes that we can raise at will would never have been seen or imagined by man had it not been for the invention of the microscope. What other wondrous scenes are there being enacted in every second of time within us and around us which the eye of man has never seen nor his intellect imagined! Will the accident of

circumstances or the ingenuity of man some day place within our grasp some new means of observation which will lay bare to us some new worlds of which we have hitherto not dreamed?

Is there any necessity to turn one's back on home, to rush into the vortex of town gaiety, in order to find pleasure, excitement, and romance? I trow not.

OUR DEATH'S-HEAD.



THE remarkable and beautiful Death's-Head moth is the largest of our moths and butterflies, often measuring no less than six inches from tip to tip when the wings are fully expanded. It has a broad, thick body, a large head, and a short tongue; and carries on the back strange markings resembling a human skull, from which it derives its popular name. The fore-wings are blackish gray, mottled with red and yellow, and the hind ones of a rich brown-yellow barred with black.

The caterpillar is equally handsome, about five inches long, and generally of a green or yellow colour, with numerous small black dots, and seven oblique violet stripes on each side; and near the end of the body it possesses a small rough horn. When at rest it is fond of assuming a most curious sphinx-like posture. During July and August it is busy in potato fields, greedily eating away at the leaves; but a little perseverance is needed to capture it, notwithstanding its great size, since it feeds at night, and remains concealed low down on the stem throughout the day. It, however, takes kindly to other plants, as the nettle, the dog-wood, common jasmine, the deadly and the woody nightshade. About the middle of August usually it becomes full-fed, and retires into the ground, to undergo its transformations; and by the end of August and in September appears on the wing.

Both its superior dimensions and the peculiar marking of a human skull on the thorax render this moth sufficiently remarkable; but what is still more striking and unique about it is its voice, or the power of uttering a shrill, plaintive, and mournful squeak, like the squeak of a mouse. Some moths readily produce it whenever touched or disturbed, but nothing will induce others to make it at all. Even the earlier stages of the insect have been proved to possess this strange power. The chrysalis has been heard to squeak shortly before the appearance of the adult form; and the caterpillar makes an odd grating or crackling noise when irritated, that may be compared to the snap that accompanies an electric spark; and it sometimes is repeated in rapid succession, like the winding up of a watch. Cottagers describe the caterpillar as biting its teeth at you. Doubtless the sound serves it as a means of defence, and arises from a jerky movement of the large, hard jaws over each other.

We can hardly wonder that a creature endowed with so many startling characteristics should be an object of superstitious alarm to ignorant country

folk. That it is nocturnal in habit, flying only in the morning and evening twilight, serves but to heighten the unfounded fear. When it occurs in immense abundance, as it sometimes does in different parts of Europe, the people are seized with alarm, believing it to be a harbinger of war, pestilence, and death. It goes by the names of Death's-Head Phantom and Wandering Death's-Bird in German Poland. An odd notion prevails in the Isle of France that it is dangerous; that the dust cast from its wings in flying through a room will blind you if it happens to fall in the eyes. Even in some places in England there is a common saying that it is in collusion with witches.

Whether it sucks food from flowers or not is not quite clear; its tongue appears to be too short for the purpose. But it appreciates honey—of that there can be no doubt; and it is well-known to enter beehives when it gets a chance. These huge moths have been found trying to gain access to the hives, having evidently been attracted by the odour of the honey. It is not easy to understand how a creature without offensive weapons and unprotected by any hard covering can either resist or survive the attacks of the indignant bees; but it has been observed that the hostility of the bees is disarmed by the stridulous voice of the moth, in a manner similar to their control by the voice of their queen. Instances are known in which the moth has been found dead within a hive, the bees being unable to eject so bulky an insect, having embalmed it completely in wax.

Sometimes it makes itself tiresome in this way to beekeepers, but is never likely to become so plentiful as to do much harm in this country. Modern-shaped beehives keep it out, and when old-fashioned hives are used, one can easily prevent the entrance of the moth by covering the opening into the hive with wire grating having apertures fine enough to admit nothing larger than the proper inmates. According to some continental beekeepers, the bees, apparently aware of the intrusion, take the remedy, so to speak, in their own hands. When put in the old-style hives, they erect a kind of fortification at their door, through which it is impossible for the Death's-Head to pass.

As a moth, the Death's-Head is excessively sluggish, and can hardly be roused in the day-time, even by pinching and throwing it into the air, to flutter the shortest distance. On the other hand, few insects are so powerful or indefatigable on the wing at night. Often it flies on board ships at sea, hundreds of miles from land. A few years ago a specimen was taken in their boat by fishermen in

the North Sea, about a hundred miles east of May Island. When squeezed it has been noticed to be able to emit an odour that may be compared to that of jasmine or musk.

This moth has a wide distribution. It is found over the whole of Europe and large portions of Africa and Western Asia, but does not appear to occur in America. It seems to have been taken everywhere in the United Kingdom, including the Orkney and Shetland Isles. For all this, probably its native home is the subtropics. In colder countries, as in Europe and with us, its appearance is irregular and uncertain, occurring only casually and at long intervals, or is only common in favourable years. Taking these facts into consideration, and from the fact of it being captured in mid-ocean, naturalists conclude that, generally speaking, it is rather a wanderer in than a denizen of Britain.

In one little corner of our country, however, in the warmer portions of the east and south-eastern counties, as in Kent, the moth is claimed to be constant, or found almost every year. These spots, then, we may regard as our nurseries of the moths; and we may suppose that they love to forsake the place of their birth in summer, and roam about over the rest of the country. When the moths are unusually abundant with us, then we may believe that the home supply has been largely increased by the arrival of immigrants from the Continent.

We have seen that the moth emerges in the autumn—in September. It is, however, somewhat irregular in this respect; and though September seems to be the great month for it on the wing, it also appears in October, occasionally as late as November, and probably hibernates. Else it lies in the pupa state through the winter, not turning to moth until the subsequent late spring or summer.

As regards the caterpillars, the same uncertainty prevails. You may find them almost full-fed as early as the end of June and as late as October; but July and August seem certainly the great months for the appearance of this stage. It is these caterpillars that, under favourable conditions, produce the adults in September. Thus we come to realise this fact in the development of the Death's-Head moth: that the pupa stage may last only a few weeks, as in the case just mentioned, or may extend over many months, when the emergence of the perfect moth is delayed until the following year.

To rear this moth, the best way is to try and obtain the caterpillar. The pupæ are frequently found in the potato fields, when the potatoes are dug up in the autumn, but, from delicacy of skin, they are very frequently injured, and after such disturbance often die ere they become perfect. The cause of death may be the absence of their natural conditions. Under these, they bury themselves to a depth of eight to ten inches, forming a large oval chamber of the soil and a gummy secretion, smoothing it very carefully inside, and thus obtain a more even temperature and amount of moisture. Some people keep hibernating pupæ in a warm room, or even near a fire, always covered with moss or other porous material, which is kept constantly damp; or they may be placed in bran or fine sawdust. But perhaps, after all, it is simplest and best merely to protect them well from cold and leave them undisturbed.

Yet there is no denying that in this country this strange and beautiful moth is much less frequently met with than its larva; and as it so often dies before completing its transformations, one may count one's self lucky to acquire an indigenous specimen of the perfect insect.

RAINFALL



Of all the meteorological elements, rainfall is that of which a knowledge is of most importance to landmen. Though the science of meteorology is not yet sufficiently advanced to enable us to predict with much certainty the rain of to-morrow, still sufficient knowledge of its yearly and seasonal variations, and of its local distribution, has been gained to be of great service in the carrying out of the large waterworks schemes which are now considered necessary for most of our great manufacturing towns. For this knowledge we in Great Britain are largely indebted to the persevering labours of Mr G. J. Symons, F.R.S., who, from a small beginning in 1860, has now succeeded in organising a voluntary staff of nearly 3000 observers scattered over the kingdom. Mr Symons publishes a yearly volume, entitled *British Rainfall*,

giving details of the rainfall at upwards of 3000 stations in the British Isles. With the help of these a rainfall-map may be constructed, from which one may see at a glance the variation in the local distribution of rainfall. Beginning with the eastern counties, we find the lowest rainfall, under 25 inches a year, occurs over an area extending from the Humber to Cambridge; the next zone, 25 to 30 inches a year, extending all down the east coast from Edinburgh to Surrey, and stretching as far inland as the Severn. Proceeding westward and to more hilly parts, the rainfall gradually increases, reaching 50 inches a year over large areas in the west of Scotland, the Lake District, Wales, and Dartmoor, and rising to 80 inches in the neighbourhood of the Trossachs, while in the Lake District a small area can boast of a rainfall up to 100 inches a year. This small area includes the most rainy part of England, the

average fall at Seathwaite being 137 inches a year; while the Styx, about a mile distant, has an average fall of 170 inches, with a maximum in 1872 of 244 inches. Such falls as these are seldom exceeded in temperate climates; but at Cherrapunji, a station in the Khasi Hills, in Assam, the average over twenty years amounts to no less than 493 inches. In 'rainless' Egypt, on the other hand, the average at Alexandria is 8 inches and at Cairo $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch a year. In most of our large waterworks schemes advantage has been taken of the heavy rainfalls and high altitudes of the west for the supply of towns in drier and lower districts. The Thirlmere district, from which Manchester now obtains the greater part of its water, has an average rainfall of about 90 inches a year. At Lake Vyrnwy, which supplies Liverpool, the rainfall is upwards of 70 inches a year; and in the Elan valley, in Mid-Wales, which is now being appropriated for Birmingham, the annual rainfall amounts to 68 inches.

In Ireland we have a rainfall of under 30 inches over a small area from Dublin to the Shannon, increasing to 40 inches in Donegal; while in the south-west a large area, extending from Tipperary to Valencia, has a rainfall of over 50 inches a year. It will be seen that, generally speaking, the rainfall increases as we pass from east to west and from lowlands to highlands. On comparing the rain of wet and dry seasons with that of the average of a number of years, the following rules have been established for stations in Great Britain:

1. The wettest year will have a fall of nearly half as much again as the mean.
2. The driest year will have one-third less than the mean.
3. The average of the driest two consecutive years will be one-quarter less than the mean.
4. The average of the driest three consecutive years will be one-fifth less than the mean.

Our knowledge of rainfall is not confined to its yearly variations alone, but particulars may be had of the monthly, daily, and even hourly fall at several stations. The wettest time of the year is not the same in all parts of the country. In the Midlands, for instance, February, March, and April are the driest months, and July, August, and October the wettest, the average of the wet months being half as much again as that of the dry ones. At Seathwaite, April to June are the dry months, with an average of 7 to 8 inches each; while October to January are the wet months, with an average of 14 to 16 inches each.

When we turn to daily rainfall, we find that returns from tropical countries show much heavier falls than our own. At Hong-kong, for instance, with an average rainfall of 88 inches, upwards of 27 inches have been known to fall in twenty-four hours; while at Seathwaite, with a much heavier yearly fall—137 inches—the wettest day on record

had slightly over 8 inches. One of the greatest rainstorms known is that which caused such destruction at Brisbane in 1893. The storm lasted for four days, beginning with 10 inches on the first day, followed by 20 inches on the second, 35 on the third, and finishing up with 10 inches on the last day. In the Khasi Hills, which appears to be the wettest region in the world, 30 inches a day has been recorded for five successive days.

For hourly falls the storm previously mentioned at Hong-kong shows some 'heavy scoring,' close upon 3 inches an hour being recorded for four consecutive hours. This is, however, quite eclipsed in California, where, according to a recent publication of the Weather Bureau of the United States Department of Agriculture, 11 inches have fallen within an hour. Or taking shorter periods, English thunderstorms show some surprising figures. During a storm in London in 1878, for instance, half-an-inch was twice recorded as having fallen in five minutes. Such storms are, however, both very local and of rare occurrence.

FLAMBOROUGH HEAD.

WHERE the stormy tempests blow, and the cold tides ebb and flow

O'er the rocks that far below make cruel bed,
There, grim and bare and grand, docs the sea-lapped landmark stand

That, world-over, sailors know as Flamborough Head.

Oh! the summer days are long, and the hearts of men are strong,

And there's none may seek the living with the dead;
For many a fisher brave finds with winter gales a grave
In the stormy sea that lashes Flamborough Head.

When the murky night draws in, and the haven's yet to win,
And the waters roar like lions ere they're fed,
Then a light shines far and wide o'er the seething, surging tide

From the lighthouse standing guard off Flamborough Head.

Though the hamlet seems to sleep there are those that vigil keep,

And many an eye that brims with tears unshed;
There is sorrow on the sea, and a bitter word they deem
Who tearless mourn the lost off Flamborough Head.

When the North Sea lies at rest, and the boats upon its breast

By the gentle breeze that fans it on are sped,
Ere the sky turns blue to green, speed you forth to 'King' and 'Queen'—

The wondrous sea-washed rocks off Flamborough Head.

But the fishers tell their tales of the wild October gales,
Of the minute-guns the bravest well may dread;
Of the sadness of farewell when the cry rides o'er the swell,
'Man the lifeboat!' and they launch her off the Head.

They are men of noble deeds, they are folk of simple needs,
And to danger and to toil their hands are wed;
And they ask no kinder fate than to serve and stand and wait,

And in God's good time to die off Flamborough Head.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

A RAILWAY INTO CLOUDLAND.

By GEORGE GALE THOMAS.



TIME was when the traveller who would ascend the higher Swiss valleys had either to trust to 'Shanks his mare' or drive a hard bargain with the crafty mountain innkeeper for a plodding saddle-horse and a man to lead the same. Picking his way painfully up rough bridle-paths, he had to divide his attention unequally between keeping his balance over the lurches of the faithful beast and the delights of the scenery gradually unfolding to his gaze in the ascent, and the appreciation of the scenery generally suffered considerably from the inequalities of the road. Then, as the number of travellers increased, the enterprising Swiss began to cater for their patrons by making roads up the more frequented valleys; the *diligence* was installed, and twice a week in the season went rumbling up and down with its little cargo of mountaineers.

To-day Switzerland has become in very truth 'the playground of Europe,' and its tourists are counted by tens of thousands yearly. The old cumbersome methods no longer suffice, and the Swiss, ever equal to the occasion if money is to be made, have laid out considerable sums in the construction of mountain railways, whose tiny tracks wind their sinuous way up many an up-land valley from the Oberland on the one side to the Valais on the other.

No longer does the stream of carriage traffic find its way over the Pass of the Brünig. The road is deserted even in the height of the season, and an ever-increasing army of travellers crowds the little train creeping over the steep ridge. Instead of a six-mile tramp up the road from Interlaken to the little village of St Beatenberg, perched on the precipitous edge of the Guggisgrat, one can ascend in a little car from the bank of the blue Lake of Thun.

To be sure, the nervous traveller has a *mauvais quart d'heure* as he anxiously watches the wire-cable which alone stands between him and eternity; but nevertheless this little railway has

made one of the most delightful villages of the Alps accessible to all.

Not content with achievements such as these, the Swiss have made railways up the Rigi and Pilatus to heights of six and seven thousand feet respectively, and other smaller heights like the Stanserhorn, the Burgenstock, and the Schynige Platte; while the little railway up to the heights of Mürren gives one the thrilling experience of ascending a gradient of one in four. Last year, too, was finished the railway up the Rothhorn, which holds the present record as the highest railway in Switzerland.

The success of these ventures has only encouraged the Swiss to higher flights of enterprise, and the latest plan is one the audacity of which far exceeds all previous attempts. This is none other than to carry a railway to the very summit of the Jungfrau, a height of 13,670 feet, only two thousand short of the height of Mont Blanc itself—a railway into the very topmost pinnacles of the Alps, up above the clouds. '*C'est trop, c'est trop de l'audace*,' said a Swiss to me, standing in the valley below; and the impertinence of the attempt—if one may use the expression—comes home to the traveller looking up to those awful heights, now hidden in cloudland, now gleaming white and gold in the sun far above the world of life.

The result to be achieved was tempting in the last degree. Who would not be ready, if it were possible, to take a train journey to the top of the Jungfrau, and enjoy the delights of being at a height hitherto only accessible to a few hardy mountaineers after long and arduous toil, without counting the heavy expense of employing the necessary guides? Here was a golden harvest to be reaped if Nature could be vanquished. Only a millionaire was wanted, and the promoters were fortunate in finding in M. Guyot-Sellat one who combined an enterprising brain with the longest purse in Switzerland; and, under his fostering care, the work was commenced last summer.

Hitherto mountain engineering had been limited

to levelling tracks on reasonably accessible paths and devising special systems of cog-wheels with which to pull up the steep gradients and to regulate the speed of the descent. But the presence of a glacier or of snow-drifts above the snow-line had been thought to be an insurmountable barrier to mechanical progress; and from a height of 9000 feet upwards the mountain was in the region of eternal snow. How, then, to prevent the line being swept away, as fast as made, by the constant avalanches on the upper snow-fields? or how to carry it over the endless crevasses of a slowly-descending glacier? Impossible! There was but one way—to go underground; and this was the plan adopted.

The starting-point chosen for the railway is itself some 7000 feet above the level of the sea, leaving nearly 7000 feet still to be surmounted. Setting out from the fertile plain of Interlaken, the little train of the Bernese Oberland railway is taken for a toilsome ascent of seven miles up the valley, until Grindelwald is reached after an hour and a half. Here the train of the Wengern Alp railway turns aside up the great valley and crawls painfully higher and higher to the ridge of the Little Scheidegg. At this picturesque spot, in an amphitheatre of great mountains, the Jungfrau railway commences. The line runs first on open ground, gradually ascending on the slopes of the great snow-capped Eiger. To the right is the steep side of the Jungfrau, seamed with the track of the avalanches that thunder down its side every half-hour on the hot summer days. As we ascend higher, the deep valley of Lauterbrunnen appears in sight beyond the Wengern Alp; while above it is perched the little hamlet of Mürren, hanging on the very brink of the precipice.

At length we reach the edge of the Eiger glacier, where the first station is already being made. It had been originally intended to carry the open track somewhat farther on to the foot of the great rock of the Rothstock; but it was found that the constant falls of rock from the steep sides rendered it too dangerous; so from this point the line is to run underground, beneath the Eiger glacier, to the station of Mönchjoch, at a height of 10,500 feet, thence continuing along the side of the Mönch to the station of the Jungfrau-joch (11,100 feet), where the Jungfrau itself is directly attacked.

The first gallery at the side of the glacier was commenced last summer. The hardness of the rock necessitated the use of powerful explosives. A newly invented explosive—lithotrit—was tried. It has the advantage of being perfectly harmless if brought into contact with flame in an unconfined space, and it is claimed by its inventor that it acts better than dynamite when confined, and is unaffected by changes of temperature, while at the same time costing only half the price.

Slowly and painfully the shafts are sunk to enable the tunnels to be struck out below in

either direction, and at the end of the summer these were being pushed rapidly on to permit as many workmen as possible to have room to work underground through the winter. Some three hundred are employed—Italians, as is usual on all railway works in Switzerland—and they are sheltered in two barrack-houses some half a mile apart.

As I entered the first house from the outer air, I stepped into a world of darkness, where the air was close and stifling. Down each side was a row of berths divided by boards—each berth for two men. Here and there an unkempt son of the South was lying under a sort of horse-cloth blanket. At the end of the barrack the smiling *magasinero* led the way into the larder, stored as for a siege; for after the end of September the little railway up from Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen works no longer, owing to the winter snows. From that time on until the end of May these men are to be up on the mountain-side, cut off from the living world, exiles in a world of snows magnificent to see, but cold and inclement in the last degree. In the day they are boring away in the tunnels, and at evening return to the barrack near to pass the night. Drearier of existences!

At intervals the tunnels will have galleries giving access to the upper world, and at each of these will be built the inevitable restaurant, with a balcony for the view. As each stage is completed passengers will be run on to the point of vantage; and the undertaking will thus be made to pay its way step by step as it goes, and an immediate return will be obtained on the capital.

Already a million francs have been expended, and it is expected that five or six millions—say about £250,000—will be spent in all. In this way, even should unexpected circumstances prevent the farther progress of the railway at any given point, a profitable return will be assured to the enterprising owners; for there will always be an enormous number of people only too ready to take advantage of the opportunity of getting, without risk or fatigue, to these high altitudes to breathe the exhilarating air and rest a while among the eternal snows.

There will be nothing unpleasant in the underground journey, as the propelling power will be electricity. Works are being constructed for the utilisation of some of the immense water-power of Lauterbrunnen for transmission up the mountain; and the familiar rack-and-pinion system of cog-wheels to run in the middle of the track will be employed for the trains.

Four years will be taken for the work, so that the year 1900 should witness its completion. The last portion of the tunnel will run into the very heart of the mountain, whence the passengers will mount by a lift for nearly three hundred feet to the summit of the Jungfrau—to enjoy

one of the noblest views in the whole world. What shall we say of this invasion of the silence of the eternal snows—of this trespass upon one of the few things that still remain sacred to us?

There is no doubt that the project, if successful, will serve many a useful purpose. It will open to all the world the wondrous beauties of the view from that magnificent height, and give the weakest the opportunity of breathing an invigorating air to which they would never have had the strength to climb. For medical purposes it will enable a useful study of the causes and prevention of mountain-sickness to be made, and will confer a boon by systematic meteorological observations on the summit, which will warn climbers in all parts of the country of coming changes, and thus materially lessen the danger of expeditions.

On such a vast area as this single mountain, the outlets of the railway to the upper air will be hardly distinguishable, and except at those points, and at the actual summit, the mountain will be left practically as silent and untrodden

as ever; while for those who want to be even more alone with Nature, there still remain enough peaks to give the most energetic climber a wider playground than he can ever fully explore. Yet one cannot but feel a sincere, if sentimental, regret for this noble giantess of the Alps, who has stood proudly in her loneliness from all time, admitting to her vast silences none but the bolder spirits of the ages, and delivering up her secrets only to the worthy few who have wooed through storm and stress, braving the dangers of the treacherous snow and the hidden crevasse, and daring the perils of the roaring avalanche and blinding snow-drift.

Have any dared to treat her without respect—they have been swept away into nameless graves in her icy bosom. But now she is to succumb to this daring attack, and admit to her inner secrets the crowding tourist and the personally-conducted tripper, or any one who will care to spend forty francs on a return railway-ticket, while the clear air of the topmost height is disturbed by importunate voices demanding from the waiters '*Lager Bier mit Cigurren.*'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

CHAPTER XXXV.—SMITWOOD.



HAT I am alive to this day and fit to write this tale I owe to William Baillie. He saw me fall and the press close over me, and though hard beset himself, he made one effort for my salvation. 'Mathy,' he cried, 'and Tam and Andra, look after your man and get him up,' and then once more he was at death-grips. They obeyed his bidding as well as they might, and made a little ring in the centre around me, defending me with their weapons. Then they entwined us and lifted me, senseless as I was, to the light and air. As for Kennedy, he was heavy and florid, and his life had gone from him at the first overthrow.

I do not know well how I was got from the fray. I think I should have been killed had not the Ruthvens, whose best men were wounded, given way a little after. Their trick of surrounding the enemy by spreading wide their wings was not wise, and met with sorry success; for it left their middle so weak that when Kennedy and the valiant Earl had been mastered there remained no resistance. So, when my friends made haste to push with me to the back, they found their path none so hard. And after all that there was nothing but confusion and rout; the one side fleeing with their wounded, the other making no effort to pursue, but remaining to rest and heal their hurts.

As I have said, I was unconscious for some time, and when I revived I was given a sleeping draught of the gipsies' own making. It put me

into a profound slumber, so that I slept for the rest of the day and night, and well on to the next morning. When I awoke I was in a rough cart, drawn by two little horses, in the centre of the troop, who were hurrying westward. I felt my body with care, and found that I was whole and well. A noise still hummed in my head, and my eyes were not very clear, as, indeed, was natural after the fray of the day before. But I had no sore hurt, only little flesh scratches, which twinged at the time, but would soon be healed.

But if this was my case, it was not that of the rest of the band. The battle had been like all such gipsy fights—very terrible and bloody, but with no great roll of dead. Indeed, on our side we had not lost a man; and of the enemy Kennedy alone had died, who, being a big man and full-blooded, had been suffocated in his fall by the throng above him. It was just by little that I had escaped the same fate, for we two at the time had been in death-grips; and had I not been thin and hardy of frame I should have perished there and then. But the wounds were so terrible on both sides that it scarce seemed possible that many could ever recover. Yet I heard in after-days that not one died as a result of that day's encounter. Even the Earl of Hell and his daughter Jean recovered from their wounds and wandered through the country for many years. But the sight of the folk around me on the march was very terrible. One man limped along with a great gash on his thigh, in which I could have placed my open hand. Another had three fingers shorn

off, and carried his maimed and bandaged arm piteously. Still a third lay in the cart with a breast wound which gaped at every breath, and seemed certain ere long to bring death. Yet of such strength and hardihood were these extraordinary people that they made light of such wounds, and swore they would be healed in three weeks' time. Perhaps this tenacity of life is due in some part to their excellent doctoring, for it is certain that these folk have great skill in medicaments, and with herb-concoctions and I know not what else will often perform wondrous cures. I have my own case as an instance—where first I was restored from a high fever by their skill, and second from a fit of suffocation far more deadly.

The storms of the day before had passed, and a light frost set in which made the air clear and sharp and the country-side plain even to the distances. We were passing under the great mass of Tintock, a high hump-backed hill which rises sheer from the level land and stands like a mighty sentinel o'er the upper Clyde valley. We travelled slow, for the wounded were not fit to bear much speed, and many of the folk walked, to suffer the horses to be yoked to the carts. After a little I espied the captain walking at the side, with his shoulder and cheeks bandaged, but as erect and haughty as ever. Seeing that I was awake, he came over beside me and asked very kindly after my health. His tenderness toward me was as great as if I had been his son or nearest blood-kin. When I told him that I was well and would get down and walk beside him, he said that that would be a most unbecoming thing, and would never do, but that he would have a horse brought me from the back. So a horse was brought—an excellent black, with white on its fetlocks—and I mounted, and, despite some little stiffness, found it much to my liking.

Baillie told of the end of the battle and all the details of its course. He was in the highest spirits; for, though his folk were sore wounded, they had yet beaten their foes and sent them off in a worse plight than themselves. Above all he was full of a childish vanity in his own prowess. 'Saw you that muckle hullion Kennedy, Master Burnet? I gied him some gey licks, but I never could win near eneuch to him for his muckle airm. You grippit him weel, and he'll no bother us mair. His ain folk'll keep quiet eneuch aboot the affair, I'll warrant, so we may look to hear naething mair about it. I'm thinkin', tac, that the Yerl'll no' seek to come back my gate again. I tried to mak' him fecht like a gentleman, but faith, he wadna dae't. He just keepit cuttin' at my shanks till I was fair wild, and telled some o' our ain folk to tak' the legs frae the body wi' a seythes-stick. I ha'e'n seen a fecht like it since that at the Romanno Brig fifteen years syne, atween the Faas and the Shawes, when they were gaun frae Haddington to Harestane. Oor folk wad ha'e been

in't if they hadna comed up ower late and just seen the end o't.'

'And will you have no further trouble about the matter?' I asked. 'If the justice gets word of it will you not suffer?'

'Na, na,' he said, with conviction; 'nac fear. Thae things dinna come to the lugs o' the law. We didna dae ony hairm except to coorsels, and there's nane o' us killed save Kennedy, whae deed a naitural death, so there can be nac word aboot that. Forbye, how's the law to grip us?' And he turned on me a face full of roguish mirth which looked oddly between the bandages. 'If they heard we were at Biggar Moss yac day and cam' after us, afore the morn we wad be in the Douglas muirs or the Ettrick hills. We're kittle cattle to fash wi'. We gang slow for ordinar', but when aucht presses we can flee like a flock o' stirlin's.'

'Then where are you going?' I asked.

'Whaur but to Lanerick,' he said. 'There's a fair comes on there Monday three days, and the mair is grand boddin'. I didna ask your will on the matter, for I kenned a' places the noo were muckle the same to ye, provided they were safe and no' ower far away frae the wast country.'

'That's true enough,' I said, thinking sadly of Marjory and my miserable plight. I had not told Baillie anything of my story, for I did not care to commit it to such ears. But I was glad that we travelled in this airt, for I had still in my heart a wild hope that by some fortunate chance I should be in time to save my love.

About midday we came to Lanark Moor, where the baggage and shelties, as well as most of the women and children, were left behind to find an encampment. As for us, we pushed on to the town to see what was doing and hear some news of the country-side. I had no fear of detection, for in my new guise I passed for the veriest gypsy in the land. I was still clothed in my suit of crimson, but the fight had left it torn in many places, and all smirched with mire and bog-water. Also, my face was not only stained with the captain's dye, but the storms and dust of the encounter had deepened its colour to the likeness of an Ethiop. I had not a rag left of gentility, save maybe the sword which still swung at my side. In this fashion I rode by Baillie's elbow in a mood neither glad nor sad, but sunk in a sort of dogged carelessness. The entrance to the town was down a steep path from the moor, for the place is built above the gorge of the Clyde, yet somewhat lower than the surrounding moorlands. Far on all sides I had a view of the wide landscape, from the rugged high hills of Tweeddale and the upper Clyde to the lowlands in the west, which stretch to Glasgow and the sea.

But when we came to the town there was a great to-do, men running about briskly and talking to one another, old women and young gossiping at house and close doors, and the upper

windows filled with heads. There was a curious, anxious hum throughout the air, as if some great news had come, or was coming ere long. I forgot for a moment my position, and leaned from the saddle to ask the cause at a man who stood talking to a woman at the causeway-side. He looked at me rudely. 'What for d'ye want to ken, ye black-faced tinkler? D'ye think it'll maitter muckle to you what king there is when you're hangit?' But the woman was more gracious, and deigned to give me some sort of answer. 'There's word o' news,' she said. 'We kenna yet what it is, and some think ae thing and some anither, but a' are agreed that it'll mak' a gey stramash i' the land. A man can' ridin' here an hour syne, and has been closeted wi' the Provost ever since. Honest man, his heid'll be fair turned if there's onything wrang, for he's better at sellin' tatties than reddin' the disorders o' the State.' And then the man by her side bade her hold her peace, and I rode on without hearing more.

By-and-by we came to the market-place, where stands the ancient cross of Lanerick, whereto all proclamations are made for the Westlands. Straight down from it one looks on the steep braces of Kirkfieldbank and the bridge which the Romans built over the river; and even there the murmur of the great falls in Clyde comes to a man's ear. The place was thronged with people standing in excited groups, and the expression on each face was one of expectancy. Folk had come in from the country round as on some errand of inquiry, and the coats of a few of the soldiery were to be discerned among the rest. But I had no fear of them, for they were of the Lowlands regiment, and had no knowledge of me. The sight of us, and of myself in especial—for Baillie had changed his garb—caused some little stir in the crowd and many inquisitive looks.

The captain came up to me. 'There's dooms little to be done here,' he cried; 'the place is in sic a fever. I canna think what's gaun to happen. We may as weel gang back to the muirs and wait till things quiet down.'

'I know not either,' said I; and yet all the time I knew I was lying, for I had some faint guess at the approach of great tidings, and my heart was beating wildly.

Suddenly the crowd parted at the farther end, and a man on a wearied grey horse rode up toward the cross. He held a bundle of papers in his hand, and his face was red with hurry and excitement. 'News,' he cried hoarsely—'great news—the greatest and the best that the land has heard for many a day.' And as the people surged round in a mighty press he waved them back, and dismounted from his horse. Then slowly and painfully he ascended the steps of the cross and leaned for a second against the shaft to regain his breath. Then he stood forward, and cried out in a loud voice that all in the

market-place might hear: 'I have ridden post-haste from Edinbro' with the word, for it came only this morn. James Stuart has fled from the throne, and William of Orange has lauded in the south, and is on his way to London. The bloody house has fallen, and the troubling of Israel is at an end.'

At that word there went through the people that sound which I shall never forget as long as I live—the sigh of gratitude for a great deliverance. It was like a passing of a wind through a forest, and more terrible to hear than all the alarms of war. And then there followed a mighty shout, so loud and long that the roofs trembled, and men tossed bonnets in air, and cried aloud and wept, and ran hither and thither like madmen. At last the black cloud of the persecution had lifted from their land, and they were free to go and tell their kinsmen in hiding that all danger was gone for ever.

As for myself, what shall I say? My first feeling was one of utter joy. Once more I was free to go whither I liked and call my lands my own. Now I could overmaster my cousin and set out to the saving of my lass. Indeed, I, who am a king's man through and through, and who sorrowed in after-days for this very event, am ashamed to say that my only feeling at the moment was one of irrepressible gladness. No one who has not for many months been under the shadow of death can tell the blessedness of the release. But even as I joyed I thought of Marjory, and the thought recalled me to my duty.

'Have you a fast horse?' I said to the captain.

He looked at me in amazement, for the tidings were nothing to him, and in my face he must have read something of my tale.

'You mean'—he said.

'Yes, yes,' said I; 'it means that I am now safe, and free to save another. I must be off hot-foot. Will you lend me a horse?'

'Take mine,' said he; 'it's at your service; and take my guidwill wi' ye;' and he dismounted and held out his hand.

I mounted and took his hand in one parting grip. 'God bless you, William Baillie, for an honest man and a gentleman;' and I was off without another word.

I passed over the road I had come, and had no time to reflect on the difference in my condition from two hours ago, when, abject and miserable, I had plodded along it. Now all my head was in a whirl and my heart in a storm of throbbing. The horse's motion was too slow to keep pace with my thoughts and my desires; and I found me posting on ahead of myself, eager to be at my goal. In such wild fashion I rode over the low haughlands of Clyde, and forded the river at a deep place where it flowed still and treacherous among reeds, never heeding, but swimming my horse across, though

I had enough to do to land on the other side. Then on through the benty moorlands of Douglas-side, and past the great wood of the Douglas Castle. My whole nature was centred in one great desire of meeting, and yet even in my longing I had a deadly suspicion that all might not be well—that I had come too late.

Then I saw the trees, and the old house of Smitwood lying solemn among its meadows. I quickened my horse to fresh exertion. Like a whirlwind he went up the avenue, making the soft turf fly beneath his heels. Then with a

start I drew him up at the door, and cried loudly for admittance.

Master Veitch came out with a startled face, and looked upon me with surprise.

'Is Marjory within?' I cried. 'Marjory!—quick, tell me!'

'Marjory,' he replied, and fell back with a white face. 'Do you seek Marjory? She left here two days ago to go to you, when you sent for her. Your servant Nicol went after her.'

'O my God,' I cried, 'I am too late!' and I leaned against my horse in despair.

THREE YEARS OF THE NEW DEATH-DUTIES.

FOUR years have passed since Sir William Harcourt brought in his Budget of 1894, and the new death-duties have now been in force for three complete financial years.

Opinions have differed, and for a time probably will continue to differ, as to the mischievous or beneficial effect of the Finance Act; but all are agreed that the statute which regulates the payment of about one-tenth of the annual revenue of the country was the greatest piece of legislation of the day, and entitles its author to rank as a Budget-maker with Sir Robert Peel and Mr Gladstone.

The act, it may be recalled, was the result of agitation. A section of the community had long clamoured for some readjustment of the burden of taxation, for a new and fertile principle of levying duties; and Sir William Harcourt's Budget was therefore not entirely due to a lean year. 'If I had had a surplus instead of a deficit,' he stated in parliament, 'I would still have attempted to deal with the death-duties.' At the same time it was the natural concomitant of a deficit on the imperial balance-sheet for the year and of increased expenditure on the navy. For long national expenditure had been increasing by leaps and bounds, till in twenty years it had expanded nearly £24,000,000, and in a period of comparative peace had reached (if we include grants to local taxation) the astounding annual total of £103,000,000. To find the money was the first object of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; to reform the incidence of taxation, and avert the dangers of a socialistic attack upon individual property by a fair diminution of taxes on the comparatively poor, and a fair increase of taxes on accumulated wealth, were his next aims. Determined to adhere to the sound maxim of all good housekeeping, imperial or domestic, 'Pay as you go,' Sir William Harcourt found himself compelled to provide for an estimated deficit in the coming year of £4,500,000, and £1,000,000 he obtained from the readjustment of the death-duties—a readjustment which he expected ultimately

would yield an increase of revenue of from £3,500,000 to £4,000,000.

All kinds of dismal prophecies dogged the passage of the bill through parliament. Aggregation of heritable property with personalty and 'settled' property into one estate, the payment of duty upon the principal value of that estate, and at a graduated rate increasing with the largeness of the sum—these distinctive features of the new taxation were named the 'accumulated horrors' of the act, and the death of agriculture, the pauperisation of the landowners, and the flight of capital from the country were predicted results. The following deliberate opinion of a London solicitor of great experience, expressed during the progress of the bill, is typical of the fears as to its evil effects then current. 'Speaking,' he said, 'from an experience of over fifty years, I believe that the proposed increase of death-duties will lead to great evasion, and consequently will be of doubtful advantage to the revenue. I have found an increasing desire, especially on the part of foreign merchants and others who have made money in this country, to escape these duties either by settlements or by transfer of property to their children under arrangements of various kinds. Further, people will be 'cute enough to discover that by investing their money in inscribed or other securities in America and elsewhere they will escape the probate-duty, and if they reinvest the income without bringing it to this country will also escape income-tax. I have known securities to the amount of millions sent out of this country in anticipation of death in order to escape duty. The present state of the law operates very hardly and causes much discontent in the case of capitalists resident abroad and not English subjects, who, as is often the case, have left large sums with leading mercantile and other houses in London and elsewhere. When they die the probate-duty now payable is very onerous. If it is increased the result may probably be the withdrawal of considerable capital from this country.'

The working of the act for three complete finan-

cial years has proved the fears of its opposers to have been unfounded so far as regards any detrimental effects on the revenue through evasion. On the contrary, since the act came into operation the Chancellor of Her Majesty's Exchequer has ceased to juggle with annual deficits, and once more conforming to Lord Sherbrooke's famous definition, may again truthfully be called 'an animal for the production of surpluses.' The growth of national prosperity has had its share in adding to those surpluses; but the fatness of the national purse is largely owing to the increase of the death-duties, which has exceeded all expectation. The part of the act relating to the death-duties came into operation on the expiration of the first day of August 1894, in the middle of a financial year, and the experience of the second half of the year 1894-95 was insufficient to give any clear indication of the financial effects of the changes which it introduced. The increased revenue from all the death-duties during that period was £1,138,000, and it is estimated that £960,000 of that sum was attributable to the new act. The financial year 1895-96 was the first complete year during which the statute was in force; the net gain to the Exchequer was £2,885,000 as compared with 1894-95, and £4,023,000 as compared with 1893-94, the last year before the passing of the act. Thus, in eighteen months, instead of in several years, there were realised the anticipations of Sir William Harcourt that the ultimate net gain to the revenue from the provisions of the act would be about four millions. In July 1896 the Finance Act 1896 came into operation. It contained certain clauses relating to the death-duties the objects of which were not to depart from the principles of the act of 1894, but to remove some cases of hardship which had become manifest in the working of the original act. Owing to the alleviations introduced by those clauses, the death-duties fell slightly for the year 1896-97, yielding £13,963,000, as compared with £14,088,605 in the previous year; they nevertheless exceeded the Chancellor of the Exchequer's estimate for the year. In 1897-98 the yield has been £15,328,000, an increase of £1,365,000, and £1,400,000 above the estimate.

These figures show that the fears of evasion were greatly exaggerated. Increased evasion there certainly has been; it is proved by the experience of solicitors, and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue also have found evidence of it in the statistics of the last three years. 'It is a safe generalisation,' they remark in one of their reports, 'that every increase in the rate of a tax is followed by some decrease in the amount of the property or the articles subject to it. The results of the Finance Act 1894 will certainly not constitute an exception to this most universal of fiscal experiences. But there is as yet no evidence to show that the new estate-duty is being avoided to a greater extent than was anticipated or allowed for at the time when it was imposed.'

One drawback of the new duties is the difficulty of estimating what they will yield in any one year. Under the former system a nearly uniform rate was levied on all estates, and the total value of estates liable to duty in a single year might be estimated beforehand with tolerable accuracy. But the system of graduation has introduced quite a new element, and has made a forecast very unreliable; for the amount of duty exigible depends now not only on the collective amount of estates, but also on the size of each. To go for an illustration to the last financial year ending April 1898, duty was paid in that year on the estates of nine millionaires valued in all at £15,750,000. The estate-duty alone on these amounted to £1,260,000, or more than one-twelfth of the entire revenue from death-duties of the year; and they no doubt yielded also a substantial sum in the shape of legacy and succession duties. But if it had chanced that the above sum of £15,750,000 had been equally divided among sixteen hundred people instead of among nine, the revenue would have benefited only to the extent of £472,500, the loss of £787,500 being due to the rate of duty that would have been leviable, millionaires paying eight per cent., while persons whose estates are worth nearly £10,000 pay only three per cent. Millionaires can hardly be expected to oblige the Chancellor of the Exchequer by dying at a uniform rate year after year; and thus, to quote the words of Sir Michael Hicks Beach, 'the deaths of a very few men on the one side of the line or on the other make a difference of hundreds of thousands of pounds in the receipts of the revenue during any particular year.' The fluctuations of the death-duties promise to be as full of surprises as Death himself; and blessed in the eyes of the revenue is the death of a millionaire.

Attempts at evasion have taken various forms; some have been successful, others have not. The commonest mode has been the transfer by a man while still in life of the whole or a considerable portion of his property to his children or other relatives. This method, however, is not unattended with risks; and there have been cases in which the favoured son unexpectedly predeceased his father, who found himself compelled to pay the very duties he had been over-anxious that his son should escape. Death, again, has intervened and taken away the parent within a year of the transfer, and so frustrated the hopes of evasion, which do not become certainties until twelve months have elapsed. The transfer must be absolute, with no reservations other than mental, as Earl Grey has found to his cost. In 1885, nine years before the Finance Act was passed, the late Earl Grey made over his estates to his nephew, the present Earl, subject to a rent-charge and a power of revocation. In 1894, ten days before his death, the late Earl released the rent-charge and the power of revocation; but notwithstanding this, estate-duty has been found due upon the whole estate conveyed, the

law regarding the transaction of 1885 as no real divestiture by the late owner. The deed which embodied it bristled with covenants and limitations, and the later deed of 1894 was rendered ineffectual by the death of the Earl within twelve months of its date. Most evidently the net of the Inland Revenue is spread very wide; its meshes are small; and it will require all the adroitness and acumen of solicitors even of fifty years' experience effectually to assist in the evasion of the death-duties by settlements of property under suitable arrangements. The attempt, however, is being made, especially in cases in which the duties would absorb three or four years' income, and there have even been instances of entail proprietors resigning their interest in their estate ('propelling' is the technical word) in favour of the next heir of entail.

The sums that have been paid in estate-duty on single estates are startling, a millionaire being mulcted in estate-duty alone to the extent of £80,000; while, if his estate descends to others than children, another £40,000 at least may be claimed for succession-duty. In Scotland the estates that have paid the largest duties are those of the late Earl of Moray and the late Duke of Hamilton. In England they have been matched recently by the estate of the late Sir Isaac Holden, and in other cases considerably surpassed. One curious effect of the Finance Act is that the gift of a poor man may be more valuable than that of a rich; for by it all legacy and succession duties were abolished in the case of estates under £1000 in value. Thus a legacy of £500 from a rich man may subject the recipient to payment of £50 of duty if he be a stranger in blood to the donee, while the same legacy from one who dies worth less than £1000 is free of duty.

Probably the only section of the community who consider the Finance Act an unmixed blessing are the managers and agents of life insurance companies. Very shortly after the introduction of the bill into parliament the idea occurred to insurance managers, who are feeling the pressure of keen competition, and who are ever on the outlook for new business, that in the Finance Act lay an unworked mine of insurance wealth. For, if a man's estate was

liable on his death to duties amounting to £1000, surely the best way to provide for that liability was to insure his life for that sum. A large section of the public being in a state of panic, tempting advertisements were issued by most of the life insurance companies throughout the country; and that the bait took is evinced by the fact that the balance-sheet of every important life insurance company shows in the succeeding year a substantial increase in the amount of premiums paid. Royalty led the way, the Princess Royal, the Duke of Connaught, Princess Beatrice, and others all insuring for large sums—in some cases for as large policies as the insurance companies were prepared to grant. The Duke of Edinburgh's proposals to insure were, however, not accepted, his 'life' being, from the insurance point of view, it appears, not a promising or reassuring one. Insurance may advantageously be combined with an absolute transfer of property by a father to a son, the son insuring his life to cover the risk of his predecease. In such a case the premium would be much less than were the father to insure his own life, retaining his property himself.

It is very doubtful whether solicitors have profited by the statute. Certainly to Scotch lawyers, owing to the unfamiliar language in which the act is couched, its intricacies have caused a wear of brain-tissue incommensurate to any fees they may hope to obtain. A younger generation, nurtured on its provisions, may take kindlier to the fare; but the present race has had to unlearn too much to look upon its innovations with any favour. To no section of the community has it caused more trouble than to Inland Revenue officials. To them fell the task of preparing schedules explanatory of the provisions of the act and forms upon which accounts of the duties might be given up. This involved an immense amount of labour and endless revisions, and for some months the difficulty of getting accounts passed and the consequent delay caused no little inconvenience and irritation. The wheels of routine are now once more working smoothly, and the fact that there have been few judicial decisions on the act, and none in Scotland, is eloquent testimony to the skilful draughtsmanship of its framers.

THE CURSE OF MUNGLI.

CHAPTER III.



GIVEN, a young man, mainly of yeoman stock, portionless, and born by some freak of a meddling Providence to a heritage merely of bodily sloth, commercial incapacity, and a spiritual fervour of restlessness that unite together to raise in him a curious longing called artistic ambition; and let this vain

activity pitch him head-foremost into a place called London, which he discovers is for him, at the start of what he fatuously calls his career, a mere pandemonium and place of torture. Let him ripen there, or rot, whichever it is, for many months in a sour fourth-floor attic, tasting the bitterness of solitude at broad noon amid the tumultuous throbbing of that inner chamber of

the world's heart known as Fleet Street, and finding that the same thoroughfare at half-past two on a November morning, when the fog has chilled the marrow in him, and there is only one policeman in sight, is thronged with brilliant, impalpable, friendly presences—his Ideas. Then let him run home, and sit above blank sheets of paper, oblivious of meal-hours, till the dim twilight closes round him. And let him, while thus vaguely pursuing his folly, be told one day by the doctor in a dim and vast consulting-room, while the ponderous furniture seems to waltz solemnly round and round him, that those wheezings in his chest, and other mutterings of a rebellious economy, if left unstilled by fresh air and wholesome living, mean—the doctor forecasts the consequences as gently as may be, but with unmistakable clearness. And let the young man go dizzily out, and home, pawing blindly for support at mirage-like house-fronts and railings, and hungering for the unattainable in the form of sunlight clear of city smoke, and a house-free horizon, and sleep like death, with a passion of heart-hunger beside which the physical craving of the castaway is mere satiety. And let there-upon the fickle Providence, through its chosen instruments of death, a letter, a lawyer, and the rights of property, once more take this man up by neck and heels and pitch him half-round the world along the road of his desires. Given all that, with Hannah M'Cunn—ample in ignorance, mute as the stars concerning spiritual things, with the depths in her unstirred—by appointment of the same inscrutable Agency, to meet him, the heir of curse-ridden Mungi, at the end of his journey, and sing him into wakefulness with the song of her silence: and you have, flung together from the ends of the earth, the two poles of misunderstanding. You have them, too, in a setting most suitable for the working out of a very tragedy of misconception; putting forth in the dark, on a dusty five-mile bush-track, with a murder-haunted ruin at one end of it, and a Scotchman, nursing his bitter wrath against the unknown stranger, at the other.

Donald M'Cunn once more sat at his hot pine-table. It was dark and late, and the doors and windows gaped as before; the night was choking hot, and the laden air thrilled maddeningly to the strident chirping of a multitude of locusts. Thoughts of the drought upon his lands; the rage that burned in him when he sought for spiritual comfort and for resignation; fear of the big daughter that had stood before him a little while ago like a mild, accusing angel; his quenchless hatred of the possessor of God-forsaken Mungi; and the aching hunger that all the while was in his ears, listening for the sound of the hoof-beats of his daughter's horse: these and the like uncomfortable musings had flogged the old squatter till he sat and clutched his head, because a fear

had laid hold upon him of the things his hands might do and the words his tongue might utter if he set them free.

He heard the steady flapp-flapp of a horse's feet in the powdery earth, and ran out, seeming not glad, somehow, that his daughter had come safe home again.

Hannah, walking level with the horse's shoulder, with her hand upon his neck, was leading, or being led by, the grey, and dimly to be seen there sat a man riding woman-fashion in the woman's saddle. She stopped the horse five paces from the veranda, where M'Cunn stood tilted curiously forward, with his enormous hands hanging loosely at his sides.

'Who is this man?' he said; and at the sound of his voice Hannah went, not towards him, but nearer to the stranger.

'I—I forgot to ask his name—we—we were talking of other things, father; but he's a stranger, and he's hurt, and I brought him here for rest and food.' There was a fluttering in her voice that was new to Donald M'Cunn, and as he heard it the evil things that had threatened him in the dark entered into full possession of him.

'Ah!' he snarled; 'then I'll ask the gentleman that rides a-horseback while my daughter walks to repair the omission and tell me what he's called.'

'Certainly,' the stranger said coldly and quietly. 'I'll answer the remark about riding and walking when there are no ladies present, Mr M'Cunn. My name is Baynton.'

Hannah stood away a step from the horse; M'Cunn laid hold of a veranda-post with both hands on a level with his face. The man who called himself Baynton looked from one to the other as if stupefied.

'Come away, Hannah; come away,' M'Cunn said in a dry half-whisper. 'And you—you, Baynton, accursed of God, get away from before my face lest the Lord make me the instrument of His wrath towards you.'

The harsh song of the locusts filled up the pause that fell upon the three people, not one of whom could see in the starlit, sweltering dimness what was in the other's face. M'Cunn, with his hands still clutching the post, glared at his enemy. Although, when it sounded alone, the continuous brassy whirring of the locusts seemed deafening, like the sustained clashing of cymbals, yet the cringing of the saddle as Baynton drew himself sharply up, and even the sound of the girl's hands as they fell limp against her skirts, struck out as clearly against the uneasy buzzing of the insects as chalk-marks on a blackboard. The kind little grey horse champed sleepily on his bit and prepared to doze pending the removal of his saddle.

'Father,' said the girl, ashamed, 'the man's hurt and hungry. You'll never refuse him'—

'There's neither bite nor bed beneath my roof for the spoilers of my lan' and herds.'

Mr M'Cunn's assiduous study of certain portions of the Scriptures, added to a native and cultured talent for an archaic and orthodox style of abuse of his enemies, rendered him, there could be no question about it, a dangerous opponent in acrimonious debate. Unfortunately for himself, though, at this supreme moment, with everything in his favour—standing armed on his own battlements, as it were, before a helpless rival, and with a twenty years' rage biting like scalding acid on his tongue—he was encountering, for the first time in his life, more than his match.

The stranger rose joyously to the occasion. He took off his huge brand-new sombrero with a politeness which at that time and place had something tragic in it, and turning to Hannah, said very deferentially: 'May I ask you to retire just a moment, Miss M'Cunn, while I settle a little matter of business with your father before I take my leave?'

'No, no,' she said, sobbing or laughing, it was hard to tell which; then, coming suddenly close to him, she whispered quickly up at him: 'Do what you must, but I'll not leave you. Lad, I'm frightened for you, somehow.'

Baynton nodded, and dropping his airy manner, he addressed himself clearly and cuttingly to the squatter: 'Donald M'Cunn, I am your neighbour. I and mine have done you no ill; I'm hungry, tired, and sore, and I ask you for your hospitality.'

'And I,' said the old man, with angry hardness, 'refuse it to you and yours for evermore, and I bid you get out of my sight. Ay, and that quickly,' he added ferociously, waving his arms in the direction of Mungi.

'I'm going,' said the stranger coolly, 'presently. But I warn you, M'Cunn,' he said sternly, 'that if you send me away hungry, the blight that you—*you*, do you hear?'—he pointed a long finger at the old man's chest—'brought down upon the house at Mungi shall descend upon your head; and the God that you have blasphemed against all your days shall visit you with the cruelty that you have meted out to others, and leave you at the last naked and alone.'

Hannah, trembling and bewildered, put up her hands. M'Cunn laid hold of the post again. This assault upon him, with his own weapons, coming swiftly out of the heat and loneliness of the night, and while he was already curiously wrought upon by his solitary brooding in the dark house, overwhelmed him utterly. His breathing came hard and sluggishly as he stared at the stranger.

'Now,' said Baynton quietly, 'am I to go?'

'Ay,' M'Cunn answered, like one repeating a formula, 'you are to go.'

'No,' Hannah said, and caught Baynton's wrist in both hands; 'no, no, no!'

The voices came out tense, clear-drawn, and echoless against the thin, distressing tumult of the locusts.

M'Cunn tightened his grip on the wooden post as he watched her and heard the break in her deep voice.

'Come he-ere, Hannah,' he said, but meaninglessly; and Hannah did not move.

'It strikes me, M'Cunn,' the stranger said gently, looking down into Hannah's upturned face, 'that the house of Crannoeh is already beginning to fall about your ears. Just think for a moment. Have you a friend in the world? No. You had a wife as good as gold, and you set your heel upon her heart. You have a daughter whose shoe-strings you are not fit to unloose, and she has left your home for ever, except you relent, to live in the house called Mungi; and the curses you laid upon that house are coming home to roost on your own roof-tree.'

He looked up. The veranda was empty, for early in this last deliberate discourse of Baynton's, M'Cunn had gone quietly on his stocking feet inside the house. The breath hissed between his shut teeth, and his eyes, even in the darkness of the house—the night, unnoticed by them all, had closed down gradually in deeper and deeper blackness—shone full and strangely. M'Cunn, who moved like a man walking in his sleep, took down an old, well-kept revolver from the wall and raised the hammer noiselessly. Then, standing well back in the room, he took a steady aim at the man upon the grey horse as he stooped above Hannah. To the eye of the bushman in the house, trained to the night-watching of cattle, the group outside was excellently clear. M'Cunn, who from a galloping horse could kill a scrub bull in full career, saw even a faint but sufficing glint cast along the barrel from the new-shum's white moleskins. He felt the fine-set trigger with the finger of a marksman.

As Baynton looked up he saw nothing but empty darkness in the doorway; and why it was that Hannah suddenly dragged him from the saddle and set him on the ground, while she drew herself up to her full height, though shaking in every nerve, between him and the house, neither of them to this day can tell.

It was before Hannah had unceremoniously dragged Baynton to the ground that M'Cunn, with his eye along the barrel of the revolver, heard a sound like the falling of a grain of seed here and there on the iron overhead; and the noises spread quickly till the whole roof was whispering sweetly to the fall of a steady rain. The old squatter heaved a big breath, and looked up and then about him curiously. He brought the revolver close to his eyes and felt it gingerly in the dark. Perceiving that the hammer was raised, he lowered it carefully; and as he hung the weapon up again in its place he muttered to himself a warning, grateful, comprehensive 'H-m—

h-m.' Then he went out upon the veranda, and crossing it, stepped down and stood with arms akimbo, looking up so that the rain fell upon his face. He wheeled suddenly on the other two, standing five paces off.

'The rain,' he said fervently, like a man praying. 'Losh! The r-r-ain. Hannah!' he said blithely, 'yer saddle, lass;' and as Hannah did not move, he came over and took off the saddle and bridle from the grey himself. The two others made room for him silently.

McCunn set down the saddle against the house and came forward to the edge of the veranda. 'Come ben,' he said hospitably; 'come ben oot o' the wat' And the two came slowly, with hanging heads, into shelter.

'The two runs,' McCunn continued, as though it were a thing he had been insisting upon for years, 'of Craunoch an' Mungi joined to one another will mak' the finest cattle-station in the deestricht. They will that. Hannah, we might have a light, an' a bit of supper for yourself and—and Mr Baynton.'

When the light was brought the two men—both of whom, since the sound of the rain had broken in upon their conversation, seemed as if dazed and drunken with fatigue—looked long at one another from beneath bent eyebrows; then, moved by a common impulse, they shook hands without a word.

McCunn threw his open hands apart as if making the stranger free of his house and all that was in it, saying, 'I'll to my bed; my eyes are heavy.' He shuffled away, but pulled up by the door, with his eyes upon the revolver hanging on the wall, then moved on, shaking his head slowly between uplifted hands, and saying devoutly to himself, 'Lorrd, Lorrd; the rain, the rr-a-in.'

The Providence that seemed to lay the snares of misunderstanding so thick about the feet of the man and woman who met on the blood-stained threshold of Mungi from such wide-sundered worlds of experience must after all have been busy with other work, to other ends.

Baynton woke up from a dreamless sleep of the

kind he had thought was nowhere for him on the living side of death, to find himself in thick darkness, but at peace, stretched on the veranda of the Craunoch homestead. The rain still sang its long 'hush' on the iron and fell in chattering runcels from the grooves upon the ground below; and woven among the sounds there was a woman's voice, singing a lullaby. Baynton reached up and held a hand that lay on his temple.

'Have I slept long, Hannah?'

'Not long, I think. I do not know.'

'And have you sat there all the time—awake, and singing?'

'I have been here, awake, I think. Was I singing?'

'Ave you sorry, Hannah? It was sudden and strange. And the weather before the rain came?' She tugged at her hand, but he drew it down to his neck. 'Was I too—too violent to your father?'

'You did right. But how did you learn it all?'

'All what?'

'About his hardness, and my mother, and—and me.'

'When I told you of it first, you said you weren't singing to yourself, Hannah?'

'I didn't know it.'

'And you thought I was crazy. Come now.'

She snuggled her hand against his neck.

'There,' he said. 'It was like the singing, all that you told me between Mungi and here. You didn't know.'

'And I didn't ask your name.'

'But except for that, and the other unimportant detail that I was the heir of Mungi, you seemed to find out all the rest about me, didn't you, Hannah?'

'Ay. It's wonderful.'

'It is. And we'll look for more wonders like it, and find them.'

The tops of the ragged trees that crowned the ridge beyond the creek were showing black against a cool, wet grayness.

'What is that light?' Baynton asked.

'It is the dawn,' said Hannah.

THE END.

THE AUCKLAND ISLANDS.



PERHAPS the last place in Greater Britain still uninhabited though habitable is a small group of islands about three hundred miles south of New Zealand, or the antipodes of a point about two hundred miles west of Cape Clear in Ireland.

The following account of them may be interesting; it is taken principally from the *Sailing Directions* published by the Admiralty. Reference

has also been made to an admirable article published in the Christmas number of the *Otago Witness* for 1895, and written by a gentleman who visited the islands in 1890.

These islands were discovered by Captain Abraham Bristow, of the whaler *Ocean*, belonging to Mr Samuel Enderby. In 1806 he took possession of them for the British Crown, and called them Lord Auckland's Islands, by which name, without the title, they are still known. On examining them

he found a particularly snug anchorage, which he named Sarah's Bosom, under which name, or as Port Ross, it still appears on the charts. Then, following the example of Captain Cook, he landed some pigs, and sailed away.

The islands are not heard of again until 1840, when they were visited by H.M.S. *Erebus* and *Terror*, during the voyage of Sir James Ross to the Antarctic continent. Some time after this a body of seventy Maoris were brought from the Chatham Islands in a whaler, and they were found here by Mr Charles Enderby. To him and other members of the Enderby family the group was granted by the British Government in 1850, as headquarters of the Southern Whale Fishery Company, in consideration of the 'eminent services' rendered by the Messrs Enderby to geographical science in the Antarctic seas. The company did not pay, and after a few years the islands were abandoned, Mr Enderby leaving in 1853, and the Maoris a few months afterwards.

Whilst the company was in operation the settlement comprised, with the Maoris already there, about three hundred people. After this, principally owing to their proximity to the sailing route from Australia to England, they acquired an enviable reputation as the scene of numerous shipwrecks, the first in order being that of the schooner *Grafton*, a small, ill-found vessel, which, dragging her anchors in a heavy gale in one of the southern harbours, went ashore and became a total wreck in January 1864. The crew remained for over a year, living on seals and birds; and at last, despairing of relief, they, with scarcely any tools, succeeded in raising and decking their one small boat, and in reaching New Zealand after five days' perilous navigation.

Much more tragic than this was the loss of the *Invercauld*, also in 1864. Of nineteen men who reached the shore, there were next year, when rescued, only three survivors, the remainder having died from cold, hunger, and exposure.

In May 1866 the *General Grant*, a large passenger ship, in a calm drifted ashore against the west side of the island, where the cliffs are perpendicular and there are no harbours, and went down with the loss of sixty-six lives. Ten men and a woman escaped in boats and got round to Port Ross, where they lived on seals, birds, and pigs until they sighted a passing whaler. By hard pulling they succeeded in cutting her off, and were rescued. This party showed great ingenuity in capturing pigs. Having no firearms, they constructed a hook a foot long out of a half-inch iron bolt, and secured it to a strong line of New Zealand flax; it was then lightly attached to a long pole, and the rope and pole being grasped together, they crept cautiously towards the pigs when feeding, and hooking one by means of the pole, hauled it in with the line. Not a few were caught in this primitive manner.

After this disaster the New Zealand Government, from motives of humanity, erected several huts in different parts of the islands, amply stocked them

with provisions, and caused them to be visited by a steamer every six months; but the islands are now given a wide berth, and wrecks are more rare, one of the last being that of the *Derry Castle* in 1887. The crew were on one of the outer islands, and though they could see the government hut, they could not for some time reach it, having no boat. After a time they succeeded in constructing a punt, and fared tolerably luxuriously until taken off. A grass and a wooden hut in which they lived while waiting to get across are still in good repair—curious little huts, to be entered on the hands and knees, but sufficiently weather-proof.

The Auckland Islands consist of one large and several smaller islands; but as none of the adjacent islands are more than a quarter of a mile apart, they may practically be considered as one block about the size of Islay, their area being 140,000 acres. The greatest height is about 2000 feet, the western side being precipitous; but in the twenty odd miles of the eastern side there are three completely landlocked harbours, besides several sheltered anchorages. A low forest skirts all the shores, succeeded by a broad belt of brushwood, to a height of about 500 feet; above which to the summit of the hills extend grassy slopes. The forest consists principally of the New Zealand rata, so conspicuous in summer for its brilliant scarlet flowers. The trees are stunted in height by the wind, but very thick and strong, the boughs so interlaced that they must be either crept under or climbed over; in fact, the woods are almost impenetrable. The grass in the few clear spaces in the lower parts of the islands grows in tussocks. The lower part of the old leaves does not decay for a considerable time, while the new leaves are constantly springing up from the heart, so that after a time each plant becomes a mound two or three feet high, and walking between these mounds is very difficult. Above the brushwood the grass does not grow so much in tussocks, and by keeping on top of the ridges it is easy enough to get about the island.

Rabbits of a silver-gray kind are very numerous on Enderby Island—one of the small ones, where there is a good deal of very sandy ground; but it is doubtful if they would do well on the other islands, where the soil is principally a kind of peat.

The pigs left by Captain Bristow have, it is stated, increased in a most surprising manner. 'I have,' says Mr Enderby, 'seen on Enderby Island, when standing on the cliffs, as many as one hundred at a time feeding on the rocks beneath; and those were not the only pigs on the island, for I have likewise seen as many as six splendid black boars running in the woods, of apparently a different breed from those first noticed; but though the island is only three miles in length by one in width, I have never been able to find their hiding-places or to capture one of them.' He goes on to say: 'On the larger island of Auckland pigs are yet more numerous, and are of two descriptions—namely, those feeding on the seashore, the flesh of

which is very unpalatable until kept on vegetable food for two or three months, and those feeding on the hills or in the woods on a plant called by the Maoris cooper-cooper, which, I presume, is that described by Dr Hooker in his *Antarctic Voyage* as the *Pleurophyllum cruciferum*, or that to which it is closely allied, the *Pleurophyllum speciosum*, which has leaves two feet long by one in width; and this he mentions as the plant with its roots upon which the pigs feed, and says that it is to be found in great abundance in many places on the borders of the woods and on the hills. The flesh of those pigs I found excellent. The stalks of the plant on which they feed are covered with silky hairs, which should be scraped off. When cooked these stalks are not unpalatable, somewhat resembling rhubarb, and are commonly eaten by the Maoris. The contributor in the course of two visits to these islands saw traces of rooting but no pigs; but the shortness of the visits and the very dense nature of the bush make it quite possible that they are still as numerous as above mentioned.

Small birds are numerous and very tame; some of them seem almost unaccustomed to fly—among others a snipe and a small kind of duck. Albatrosses and other sea-birds frequent the islands in great numbers in December and January for nesting.

The climate is equable in temperature, but stormy and wet; snow is said never to lie for more than three days, except at the summits of the hills. The temperature scarcely ever falls below 30°; on the other hand, the summers are cold. Probably on the whole the climate is very much that of the Northern Hebrides.

Sheep do well; some have been turned out by the trustees of the Southland Wreck Fund. Captain Fairchild, of the New Zealand Government steamer *Hinemoa*, who probably knows more of these islands than any man now living, says in 1895: 'About six years ago, on behalf of the New Zealand Government, I placed several sheep on this island for the benefit of shipwrecked people, and they have thriven remarkably well, seeing that they have been running entirely wild. I have seen them on my periodical trips, and have caught some of them and found them very fat. Their fleece was

exceedingly long, the wool trailing on the grass, and they were free from foot-rot. About two years ago we brought two to the Bluff, and then on to Wellington; they were quite a sight, with their long wool and tails, and one would, I feel sure, have weighed 200 pounds.

'We put cattle to try how they would do on Antipodes Island, and they are doing splendidly, and are as fat as can be. I am sure they would do equally well on Auckland Island, as it is so much better sheltered, and has any quantity of the same kind of native grasses, which grow luxuriantly, and it contains several running streams.

'I have found the climate mild, the frosts being very slight, some of the native plants flowering in the winter-time. A steamer can go from Bluff harbour in New Zealand in twenty hours.'

These islands were in November 1894 offered for twenty-one years' lease by the New Zealand Government in three lots of 38,000 and 25,000 acres at £2 per annum, and of 76,000 acres at £5; at the same time the Campbell Islands, 120 miles farther south, of 28,000 acres, were offered at a rent of £2. Campbell Island was taken, but not Auckland, the reason probably being that in the former, owing to its harsher climate, there is no bush, and the whole island is available for grazing purposes. The lessees in 1895 brought down 500 sheep as a beginning, and are reported to be sanguine of their prospects.

When will Auckland Island again be occupied? What a noble deer-forest it would make! What a chance for a botanist or naturalist, armed with all the knowledge gained since the time of Dr Hooker and Sir James Ross in 1840, among the flightless birds and curious flora said to be derived from a sub-arctic land now lost!

Shelter from wind and weather can be obtained in any of the various refuge-huts, and the islands are visited every six months, generally about May and December.

But probably it will not be long before they are taken up, as usual, for sheep. The whales have gone and the seals have gone, but the grass is there; and a second attempt at colonisation will be made before long, let us hope more successfully.

THE REBEL SPY.

By JAMES WORKMAN.



WHEN the civil war broke out my brother Tom was living in New Orleans, and what should he do, the omadhaun, but go and join the Southern army; for Tom, though a good, honest lad, was never troubled with over-much common-sense. The man who goes out of his way to get a bullet or a bayonet through him is, to my way of thinking,

little better than a fool. But if he must be after fighting, and nothing 'll keep him from it, why, let him fight on the right side; and it seemed to me that Tom was fighting on the wrong one.

Perhaps the truth is that I never had much taste for fighting, barring, of course, in a friendly and neighbour-like way with the weapons that Nature gave me, or it might be with a neat little bit of blackthorn. That comes natural to any

man; but it is not ashamed I am to confess that the sight of the cold steel always sent a shiver up the small of my back.

So you see that when the recruiting went on merrily, and the rest of the boys shouldered a rifle and went singing and drumming and marching away to leave their legs and arms, and often themselves, on a battlefield, I stayed at home and worked at my little farm. There was many a hard word thrown at me in those days, and the girls turned up their noses and wouldn't look the way I was on.

'Ah, well,' thinks I, 'go your ways, my dears. It's no quarrel of mine, and there's a little cabin in County Clare where there would be little to eat, and maybe nothin' at all to pay the taxes and the rent, if Michael O'Flynn was to shoulder a rifle and get a bullet through his thick head in family quarrels that are no affair of his at all, at all.'

And perhaps there was just another little argument that made me indifferent to what the girls thought about me, and that was a bit of a liking I had for my cousin Norah, that had the charge of the dairy on the big farm next to mine. She was tall and slim, was Norah, with waving brown hair and dark-blue eyes, and a face as sweet as an angel's, and a voice like the music of a flute. I know she wasn't perfect. She'd a temper of her own, had Norah, as every girl worth the whistle of a shillelagh has, and many a dressing down she's given me; but the sweetness of her would make me feel as weak as a child, and I'd rather have had a rough word from Norah than a kiss from the prettiest girl that ever stepped on the ground.

Well, I'm a man with no manner of luck at all. It wasn't me she cared for—not she. It was Tom that was gold in her eyes, and she'd have given the whole of my clumsy body for the end of his 'little finger.' He was a fine boy, with a face like a picture, and a kind of melancholy look in his big brown eyes that made all the girls' hearts warm to him, while I—but that's neither here nor there.

There was a pair of them, for Tom was that fond of Norah he'd have cut his hand off to bring a smile to her face. It was to make a lady of her that he turned clerk and went to New Orleans; and when the war broke out, the drums and the bugles, and the blandanderin' of the speechifiers, and so on, turned his Irish head, and he was shouldering and presenting arms, and marching and countermarching, before he knew where he was.

They're queer, contradictory creatures, are women. There was another boy from a farm near by joined the South before Tom, and I was ashamed of the hard things Norah said about him, for at first she was all on the side of the North. But as soon as she heard that Tom was among the gray coats she swore by everything the South did or said

ever afterwards; and if she hadn't been the prettiest girl for twenty miles round, she'd have been tarred and feathered and ridden on a rail, for the Federals had been licked again and again and were fairly dancing with rage.

For a long time the armies never came near us; but after a while they approached us bit by bit, and every morning I'd look out with my heart in my mouth, expecting to see horse, foot, and artillery trampling through my illigant fields of wheat, and abstracting the ducks and hens, that were the pride of my heart, by way of a relish for breakfast. At last the only band I had left joined the Federals, and I was left alone on the farm. And it was then the thing I'm going to tell you about happened.

I was lying awake one night thinking about Tom and Norah, and wondering how I was to get in the harvest, when I heard a light tapping at the door. Up I jumps, all of a tremble, and laying hold of as fine a bit of timber as ever I held in my fist, I slips up the window and looks out. There was a big lump of a tramp standing at the door.

'What'll you be after?' says I. 'This is no time to be takin' dacent folk out of their beds. Away wid you, or I'll be lettin' the dog loose and givin' you a taste of the stick.'

Then the tramp begins laughin' all over him.

'Ah, go along with you,' says he. 'Is it yourself doesn't know your own mother's son?'

'Tom!' shouts I.

'Whisht, you omadhaun,' says he. 'The Yanks are all over the place, and if they lay their fingers on me without my uniform on I'll be shot as a spy. Open the door quick, and let me in.'

'Well,' says I when he was snug inside, 'it does my heart good to see you, Tom; but what's brought you here at the risk of your neck?'

'Oh,' says he, 'what would bring me here but Norah? I see her face in my dreams, Mike; I hear her voice in the wind; and see her and speak to her I must, for my heart's just sore for a sight of her. The General asked for volunteers to find out what the enemy was after, and I—knowing the neighbourhood—was chosen before all the rest. You must get me a sight of her, Mike, for I can't live without it.'

So it came about that at daybreak I went for Norah and brought her across the fields; and we passed a company of Yankees lying among the wheat—sorrow take them!—and they made game of us, thinking we were sweethearts. Norah was as white as a sheet, and her eyes shining like stars, and my heart was as heavy as lead for the pure love of her, that cared no more for me than the grass she was walking on. I couldn't bear to see them meeting, and it was mighty superfluous I was feeling altogether; and so I went into the barn to look after the beasts, and left them alone in the kitchen.

Well, I hadn't been gone five minutes when I heard a scream and a scuffle, and I runs out. I thought I should have dropped, for there was a dozen soldiers standing at the door, and Tom, with his hands tied behind him, in the middle of them. They hadn't seen me, so I cut round to the back door, and found Norah in the kitchen more dead than alive. There was no time for talk.

'Norah dear,' says I, 'there's a regiment of Southerners at Mackenzie's farm in the wood. If you love Tom you'll run like the wind and bring them here as quick as the fine legs God gave you will carry you. I'll thry to blandander these fellows till you come back; but remember every minute's worth its weight in gold, and Tom's life hangs on a thread.'

The colour come into her cheeks and the light to her eyes, and she was off before I'd got the words out of my mouth. I'm thinking there's a black spot in every man's heart. When I saw her flying among the bushes and trees like a deer, why, God forgive me, I wished, just as long as it would take you to twirl a stick round your head, that I'd stayed quiet and sung in the barn, and let the Yanks go on with Tom's funeral; for then, you see, I might have married Norah after all. I got over it; though, to tell the plain truth, the black notion kept trickling through my brain during most of the queer time that followed. Any way I shouldered a pitchfork, slipped round the barn, and came sauntering towards the soldiers as easy and cheerful as if I was going to inquire after their health.

'The top of the morning to you, boys,' says I. 'I suppose it's thirsty you are. Have you come for a drink?'

There was a long, yellow-faced sergeant in charge of them, and he give me a queer look out of the corner of his eye.

'When we happen to catch people harbouring spies,' says he, 'have you any notion what we do with them?'

'Shoot 'em, I hope,' says I. 'They deserve it.'

'We shoot the spies,' says he, keeping his eye on me; 'but the man that harbours them gets his house burnt down and his cattle driven off.'

'And why shouldn't he?' says I as cool as a priest at a wedding, though my heart turned cold within me and my knees was all of a tremble.

Then he points at Tom, that was standing against the wall with his hands and legs tied.

'We're going to shoot the spy,' says he, 'and then I reckon we'll put a match to the place we found him in.'

I fairly laughed out, though, bedad, it was all I could do to keep from crying.

'Him a spy?' says I. 'Ah, sure you're on the wrong track entirely. He's a decent boy from

the old country, that's going to help me in with the harvest.'

And at that Tom spoke up, and he says: 'I am a spy,' says he, 'and proud of it; so your harvest'll have to wait till the gray coats give the Yankees another whipping, when it'll come in mighty convenient for the cavalry.'

It seems they'd found some papers on him, and he knew I'd only ruin myself entirely by pretending to know him.

I saw his game, and I played up to him.

'You unprincipled blackguard,' says I. 'I'd rather burn every field I have than a horse of them all should get a straw of it. Oh, captain jewel,' says I to the sergeant, 'sure you'll not let the brigands come rampagin' around here. If their appetites is as powerful as what I'm towd, sure it's mysilf they'll be 'atin' up, bones and all, let alone the pigs and the poultry.' I said it with such a face that the soldiers began laughing at me, and even the yellow-faced sergeant couldn't keep from grinning.

'I'm not a captain,' says he. 'I'm a sergeant.'

'More power to you, sergeant,' says I. 'You've not been rewarded accordin' to your deserts. Shootin' spies is thirsty work,' says I. 'You'd better have a drink before you commence operations.'

He'd a cold heart in him, that sergeant; but I could see by the twinkle in his eye that I'd touched a tender spot in it. They left a man to stand sentry over Tom, and they came trampling into the house after me. Once inside I fairly played with them, for they was just starving, and hadn't had a square meal for a week. I cooked them rashers of ham and made them hot coffee and cakes; and, bedad, it was like wolves and not like Christians they was eating, and the yellow-faced sergeant was the hungriest of them all.

And whenever I got a chance I'd slip to the door and look along the track that ran through the wood and across the ford; but never a sound could I hear but the splashing of the falls higher up the river and the whistling of the birds in the trees. Back I'd go smiling as sweet and gentle as if butter wouldn't melt in my mouth, though it was heart-breaking to see the fine ham and eggs fading away like snow in sunshine. And, oh, the way I humbugged them with jokes and stories, and fed them, and sang to them, and whistled to them, makes the perspiration pour off of me to this day; and all the time my heart was sick within me, and my ears straining for the tramp of marching feet, or the clickety-clack of the horses' hoofs along the road. And through it all I felt the corner of the sergeant's cold eye boring into me like a gimlet, and I knew he was after suspecting me, and that in another minute I might be tied up alongside of Tom, and be trying to digest the cold lead instead of the fine ham and eggs the beasts was guzzling in my own little kitchen.

'Sorrow take you, Tom,' thinks I. 'Sure you might have paid a visit to your sweetheart without risking another man's skin.'

And when I thought of the little cabin in County Clare, and the poor old father and mother turned out on the bleak hillside for want of a trifle of rent, and of my own farm in a blaze, and of Norah dying an old maid, sure I hardly knew whether to cry or go out and give Tom the rough side of my tongue for all the foolishness he'd been after.

The sergeant finished at last, and leaned back in his chair, picking his teeth with a fork.

'What's your name?' says he.

'Michael O'Flynn, colonel,' says I, thinking a little promotion would soothe him.

'Well, Mr O'Flynn,' says he, with an evil grin on his yellow face, 'I've got a pleasant surprise for you.'

'I'm glad to hear it,' says I, though my heart sank into my boots.

'Come outside,' says he, and we all trooped out.

Tom was still standing with his back to the wall, with his chest out and his head up. There never was in all this world, I think, a braver man than Tom. I felt ashamed of myself when I saw him, for I felt as if a stream of ice water was beginning to trickle down my back, and my knees was shaking beneath me.

'Look at him,' says the sergeant, showing his teeth; 'look at him close, Mr O'Flynn.'

'I'm lookin' at him,' says I.

'And you don't recognise him?' says he.

'Him?' says I.

'Yes,' says he. 'I've been comparing your features, and I've got an idea, Michael, that this fine young man is your long-lost brother, as the story-books say. Now, I reckon it would be playing it pretty low down on you to separate two loving brothers that can't have seen each other for many a long year when one doesn't recognise the other.'

Then I see he knew all, and the earth and the sky seemed to whirl round me, and I saw his yellow, grinning face through a kind of mist. Tom opened his mouth to speak, but at that very minute I heard above the splashing of the falls the click-clack of hoofs and the tinkling of steel. They weren't used to the sound of the water, and could hear nothing unusual. I looked at Tom with a wink, and he shut his mouth again. But the sergeant saw the wink too.

'Seize him,' shouts he.

There wasn't a minute to lose.

'What do you mean?' says I, picking up my stick from behind the door. 'What do you mean, you that's full to the lips with my illigant ham and eggs, by callin' me the brother of a spy, you yellow-faced monkey?'

Well, the soldiers made a rush at me, and I gave an hullo, and laid about me with my stick.

I tell you I just played with them, for they'd thrown away their rifles to take me with the naked hands—me that could trail my coat through the fair at Killaloe and never a one durst step on it. Oh, bedad, it's a fine time I had of it, for it was just healtly diversion after the torments I'd been enduring inside of me. And Tom laughed and shouted:

'More power to your arm, Mike. Give it them! Whack! Hurroo!'

And it's the solemn truth I laid half-a-dozen of them out before they got a hold of me. But no man can say that the Yankees haven't plenty of pluck in them, and in the end they closed on me.

'Look out, Mike,' shouts Tom; 'look out.'

I tried to swing round, but all of a sudden my head seemed split in two, and I fell like a log; for one of the ungrateful villains had picked up his rifle and given me a whack on the back of the head with the butt-end of it. But as I fell I heard the horses come thundering through the wood, and the yells of the rebels, and the shouts of the startled Yankees.

When I came to my senses Tom and Norah was bending over me with their eyes shining with love and tenderness, and the rebels was slicing and frying the ham in the kitchen, and the Yanks was sitting in a row on the ground with their arms tied behind their backs like trussed fowls.

'Are you much hurt, Mike dear?' says Norah.

'No,' says I, sniffing the smell of the cooking, 'but it's ruined entirely I'll be if I have the honour of entertainin' the military every day.'

THE PASSING OF THE POET.

ON Western skies he gazed, and, lo!
Beyond the glory and the glow,
A Vision rose, and fairer grew—
(O eyes so dust-dimmed hitherto!)

Through opened gates stole strains of song
From the triumphant poet-throng.
Earth's broken music charms no more—
(O ears so heedless heretofore!)

What heavenly lips have kissed his,
And left thereon a smile like this?
What crown doth rest his brow above?
(O heart that had not learned to love!)

What hand hath led him far away,
By pathways where we may not stray,
To mansions builded of our God?—
(O feet that could not find the road!)

Ah, weary heart, no more distress'd!
Ah, anxious mind, for aye at rest!
Shall we thus to thy gladness come?—
(Lost child, who did not know thy home!)

ELIZABETH GIBSON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE SECRETARY MURRAY.

By JOHN BUCHAN.



THE Scottish History Society has already done valuable work in connection with the Jacobite rebellions; and now, in the *Memorials of John Murray of Broughton*, it has published the intimate chronicle of one of the arch-movers. Murray's name has become a sort of byword, like that of Ephialtes, the traitor of Thermopylae. The famous story in Lockhart, of how Mrs Scott's best china was sacrificed rather than that the family should drink from the same vessel as a traitor, is highly characteristic of the national feeling. Bitter songs were made on Murray's name, and the arcana of the English language were ransacked for abuse by gentlemen who had denied themselves the pleasure of looking into the matter. Here we have the culprit's own narrative; not to be taken altogether for gospel, but on the whole a most valuable historical document. A small pamphlet, called *The Genuine Memoirs of John Murray*, was published in 1747, and most histories, including the *Dictionary of National Biography*, have followed it. It seems undoubtedly spurious, in spite of the bravery of its title. These *Memorials* are the only genuine record of a ragged life, which, in the irony of fate, was exposed to the fierce light of a nation's scrutiny. Mr Fitzroy Bell has added much interesting matter in an appendix, and contributes an introduction which is a lucid summary of the main points in the Secretary's troubled career.

The real history, as also the real novel, of the '45 has yet to be written. And he who will write it must have a sense of the drama of it all, the fight of the few against the many, the bleak background of mossy hills, the formless, causeless schemes, the mixture of the heroic and the infinitely small. And he must have a shrewd eye to character, for the history of those years will furnish him with many intricate subjects. There were the good, honest men of the type of Keppoch and Lochiel and Dr Archibald Cameron, and the gentlemen who were much the other

way, like our hero and the younger Glengarry. There were the prudent stay-at-homes, Sir Alexander Macdonald and Macleod and Traquair; and there were the soldiers, like Lord George Murray. Then came the great lords, Kilmarnock and Balmerino and Lovat; and in the chief of the Frasers there is enough good and bad to puzzle the most cunning judge. And, finally, there were the troops of the nameless—the freebooters, thieves, spies, outlaws, and honest tacksmen—who for a moment rise to sight in the confusion, and then disappear into the unknown. For, after all, it was a great movement of profound historical significance. It was no mere struggle of reactionaries. On one side it was the last outburst of the discordant elements in Scottish life before the full national character could be formed; on another, it was the last stand made by certain medieval ideas—clanship, petty private organisations, a divinely appointed House—against a cold modern civilisation. And apart from other things, it was the nursery of the dramatic, the centre of old song and story and the sentiment of a lost cause.

Mr John Murray, who tells in his own fashion of all this, was born of a respectable Tweedside stock, the Murrays of Stanhope and Broughton, who were kin to the houses of Philpaulagh and Romanno. He was educated generously at Edinburgh and Leyden, ran between Rome and Paris and Scotland for some years as a Jacobite emissary, and finally emerged with the landing in Moidart in 1745 as Secretary to Prince Charles and counsellor-in-general to the army. He was made colonel of hussars, but he never seems to have led his regiment into action. He accompanied the southward march to Derby, just missed being present at Culloden on account of his health, fled to near the head of Loch Arkaig, where he had the famous consultation with Lochiel, Lovat, and the other Highland chiefs. Thence he departed in hot haste for the south, and his journey is as romantic a narrative as David

Balfour's. But he had no sooner got to the house of Polmood in Peeblesshire than he was arrested on the information of a herd-boy, and conveyed first to Edinburgh and then to London. From this point his record becomes discreditable. He turned king's evidence and revealed more than enough to incriminate Lovat. Hated by friend and foe, 'Mr Evidence Murray' found small comfort in either London or France. The Prince seems ultimately to have forgiven him, if we may judge from Charles Murray's account of a visit paid to his father in 1763, when the stately red-faced gentleman was pointed out to the small boy as his king. He eloped with a Miss Webb, a Quaker lady, after his first wife left him, and was father of a large family. It is possible that towards the end his reason failed him before his death in 1777. Mr Fitzroy Bell supplies a host of interesting details, such as Charles Campbell's description of him, 'a well-looking little man of a fair complexion, in a scarlet dress and a white cockade.' But his *Memorials* give us a vivid picture of the inner man, sneering, miserable, dabbling alternately in cant and truth, but always a personality.

The earlier part of the *Memorials* is the less interesting, for there Murray is mainly engaged in quarrels with Drummond of Bohaldie and Lord Traquair, and vain negotiations with slippery loyalists. He is sorely irritated again and again, and driven into reflections on human nature. In one passage he lays down the doctrine of predestination. 'Men,' he says (p. 25), 'are like Watches, some of a finer and more delicate make than others; the one goes justly, the other not. Like them in shape, so are we generally much one and the same; but our organs of sense, like their wheels and springs, are finer and coarser, as the workman has bestowed labour upon them or the Supreme Being more exquisite degrees of sensation upon our organs.' And then he adds in a characteristic note: 'I hope this Comparison will not be esteemed inconsistent with the Christian Scheme, or the rules of sound Philosophy, as no such thing is intended.' Murray's narrative gives the reader a strong impression of the scandalous mismanagement of the whole business—honest men working at cross-purposes, and blackguards fighting openly for their own hand. Many of the details given are new to me. It is refreshing to find so many of the Campbell tartan on the Jacobite side; and there is a curious account of Murray's overtures to the Cameronians of Galloway and the west, who 'were greatly disgusted with the government, and, like the Jews, had kept themselves distinct from the other inhabitants of the land.' As the time drew nigh for the actual expedition Murray's troubles increased, and Lovat and Macleod irritated him beyond endurance. He made a desperate journey from the Lowlands to Lochaber, of which we should like the details, for it must have been a rough business. But at any rate he

got to the Prince, and in a chaos of bad spelling the narrative of the campaign begins.

It is a strange revelation of the inner workings of a romantic enterprise. Spies and go-betweens are plentiful in these pages; James Mohr MacGregor, Black John Macleod, and a host of others appear under aliases or abbreviations. One learns (on Murray's word) that Lovat not only instigated the attack on the Lord President Forbes in his house of Culloden, but actually desired to have him murdered. The whole matter is very doubtful; but at the trial a witness, William Walker, declared that the attack was made by Fraser of Byerfield, and that Lovat knew nothing of it; and Norman Macleod, who could have had no reason to lie about it, in a letter preserved in the Culloden Papers describes the old lord as being in a state of vast anxiety and great misery lest it should be blamed on him. As a matter of fact, such an escapade would not have suited Lovat's plans, for the friendship of the Lord President was a card which he kept in reserve. Murray's account of the march to the south is very spirited, and every now and again he introduces little thumb-nail sketches of friend and foe. His picture of Edinburgh during the occupation seems in the main accurate. He has no special love for the Presbyterian clergy, as he is careful to show. 'And whilst I am talking of the clergy,' he writes (p. 210), 'I can't help taking notice of an incident that happened soon after. One M'Vicar, minister of the West Church, who was the only one of them who continued to preach, lett fall some things in his prayer reflecting on the Chevalier, which, when he was told of, he did not in the least seem to mind it, but said that he looked upon the fellow as an honest fool, and would have no notice taken of him.' The 'some things' thus generously overlooked by the Prince were, as the Editor points out, the petition that the young man who had come seeking an earthly crown might instead have given him a crown of glory. Throughout the narrative Murray is a great connoisseur of character. He has the good sense to admire Lochiel and Lord Pittligo ('a Saint and Hero of old'); he is, of course, devoted to the Prince; for Lord George and certain of the chiefs he has a modified respect; while, on the other hand, he has no words bad enough for Traquair and Lord Lovat. The latter is the 'most abandon'd and most detested man in his country, and one who never acted a fair part either in publick or private life.' (It is strange that these were almost the same words which Lovat, in his defence at his trial, used of Murray.) 'In short, if such like people merit the good graces and favour of Mankind, even the Laird of M'Leod need not despair of having his Villainys forgot, and one day die a Martyr.' Traquair is roundly abused, and no great wonder. 'If his lordship,' says Murray (p. 353), 'be not lost to all sense of Shame, those facts must sleep-

ing and waking stare him in the face, and make him hide his dirty head from all intercourse with the world amongst his Hills in Tweeddale.'

When the narrative begins again after Culloden it is in the form of a letter written by the Secretary to some imaginary friend who is solicitous about his welfare and anxious to hear the calumnies disproved. It begins with a lofty panegyric on virtue and heroism, in which Murray rises to the height of his great argument. He is very bitter, and with good cause, against the stay-at-home Jacobites, who fought Drum-mossie over the tea-table; the 'parcel of Antiquated Attorneys, with the help of a black Gentleman in a gown and cassock, who will show us how to march straight and easy to the Capitall. . . . Every Old Woman, Green Girl, Cock Laird, and Pettefogger being now become Soldiers and Politicians, denouncing one a Coward, Pother Traitor, and a third a Blockhead.' He tells of the last terror-stricken conference, where, to the accompaniment of Lovat's gibes, the broken, travel-worn chiefs held the last parliament of the cause. He tells of his part in the disposal of the famous treasure, and on the whole he seems to have acted well enough. The fact that he refused to escape with his dying friend Perth must be set down, as Mr Fitzroy Bell says, 'to the credit side of his strangely-involved account with honour.' When it was necessary for him to get to the south, he chose the inland road through Glenlyon and Balquhiddy. The account is good reading, especially for one who has himself tramped most of the way. Murray was set ashore in Appin, and apparently went up Glencoe and across Rannoch Moor into Glenlyon. There he lay hid for some days on a rough hillside till he could slip down into Balquhiddy. Thence he crossed Stirlingshire into Lanark, and with great fatigue came by Carnwath to Hartree near Biggar, where he found no shelter. He thought of 'taking a private road by a place called the Broadfoord to his Brother's house at Stobo,' but reflected that he might get a poor reception. So he went to his aunt's house at Kilbucho, where he was recognised by the servants, who could not understand a 'person in a jocky Coat and blew bonnet' being treated with deference and given wine instead of whisky. A scoundrelly herd-boy carried the news to some dragoons at Broughton, and when Mr John Murray was sleeping the sleep of the just in his bed at Polmood, he was awakened by the enemy and carried off to Edinburgh. Such is the account given in the *Memorials*; but there is a persistent tradition in the neighbourhood that he lay for some time in Broughton, concealed partly in a cave in the garden of his farm-steward, Bertram, at the head of the village, and partly in an old vault in the churchyard.

The rest of the book is chiefly taken up with a defence of his not very defensible later life. His

chief point is that he only became king's evidence when he knew his evidence was of no use to the government; that Lord Lovat would have been convicted even apart from his witness; and that he was careful to compromise no one who had any chance of safety, especially the English Jacobites of the type of the Duke of Beaufort. On the whole we may allow him the last point; he seems to have gone about his black performances with as much consideration as one could expect. But undeniably his evidence was the principal cause of Lovat's death, and his guilt in this matter will be differently estimated by those who regard Simon Fraser as one of the few great men and the one supreme intellect in Scotland at the time, and those who look upon him as a most perfect black-guard who made the earth cry out against his infamies. Both views have been taken, and the truth seems to be where it generally is—half-way between them. As to the first matter, it is difficult to acquit Murray. His motive in his action was less prudence and worldly wisdom than sheer naked cowardice. I cannot help thinking with Clerk of Penicuik that his capture had something of the nature of a surrender, and that he might have escaped if he had wished. The fact of putting himself so deliberately in danger's path seems to argue that he had conceived among the Highland hills the design of giving evidence, and that he went out of his way to be caught. No man would run his head into a noose so deliberately, and with so little ground, unless he foresaw some way of getting it out. The truth seems to be that physical cowardice was the rock on which Murray was shipwrecked. He was loyal and industrious, a man of some education and ability, and capable of no little admiration for virtue and a genuine devotion to his friends; but in the face of danger he wholly collapsed, and we are compelled to accept Æneas Macdonald's verdict, that 'Mr Murray was so honest between man and man that in private life he would not be guilty of a dirty or dishonest action; but then he knew him to be such a coward, and to be possessed with such a fear of death, that he was much afraid Mr Murray might be brought the length of doing anything to save a wretched life' (*Lyon in Mourning*, iii. 522).

The book is a wonderful storehouse of quaint details and a gallery of contemporary portraits done by a master-hand. Of one person we hear less than we should like. The beautiful Mrs Murray, who sat on horseback at the Cross of Edinburgh and distributed white cockades at the time of the Prince's entry, comes little into these pages. She was with Murray in Lochaber after Culloden, and with immense difficulty escaped to Edinburgh. Murray is careful to disprove certain slanders which credited her with returning from the north with large sums of money, and at some length explains that she was not tainted by any

law, 'never having acted the Amazon by bearing arms, and not having been denounced a rebel.' She went to London at his request, and then crossed to the Continent while he lay in the Tower. Of her later history nothing seems known. She is said to have been unfaithful to him, which perhaps was no great wonder, for though we may apologise now and then for the Secretary, we cannot think him much of a man.

A word about the illustrations, which are both important and interesting. There is a portrait of Prince Charles in infancy, from a miniature formerly in the possession of Murray, and now in the possession of her Majesty the Queen. Another portrait shows him in boyhood, a third at twenty-four; while there is a fac-simile of a minute of the Lodge Canongate Kilwinning 2, with Murray's name erased.

LIFE IN MADRID.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

FOR one reason, if for no other, Madrid deserves to be the capital of Spain: it is the loftiest of the large towns of the country. From the seaboard, north, south, or east, one climbs to it gradually by those amiable Spanish railways the service on which is designed to minister rather to the security than the business of life. There is something grandiose in the last stage of the journey. From whatever quarter you come to the town, the few concluding miles are a decided ascent. You zigzag through a tawny plateau with dried water-channels seaming it. The people, like the landscape, are sun-dried and brown. There are no trees to abate the heat or break the force of the wind—piercing cold in winter if from the snow-clad Guadarramas to the north, and desiccating from the south in summer. You rise and rise, until at length you come to the russet- and -white suburbs of the capital. This itself stands higher still, like a vast citadel, close pressed by the blue heavens. Gateways open from it, marking where the snow-white and very bad roads start for the extreme ends of the kingdom. But whiter, if possible, than these roads is the huge royal palace, which shows a face of some five hundred feet in length on the south side of the town. There are gardens beneath it, with trees of fair size; and lower still the much-mocked Manzanares trickles from one washer-woman to another, choked with soap-suds. But the outlook from it—save at early morn or sunset—is really quite savage. Spain seems a desert.

One continues to ascend from the railway station, over rough cobbles, past majestic buildings and pretty palm-decked squares studded with statues, until the Puerta del Sol is attained. Here we are about two thousand five hundred feet above the sea-level, and in the very holiest of holies of the Spaniard's heart. The Puerta del Sol is not a beautiful open space, like Trafalgar Square or the Place Vendôme. But it is tolerably roomy in a town notorious for its sufferings from cramp. The best hotels look upon it; the tram-cars start from it; bull-fighters, *pelota* players, and politicians alike gossip at their best in its cafés; and if there is any national agitation afoot, you may feel its pulse here as nowhere in

Spain. You may buy innumerable trivial things from the street hucksters who stand with their backs to the buildings of the Puerta del Sol, and live full pleasant days—journals, matches, old books, sweetmeats, and so forth. And nowhere in all Spain are they so assiduous in urging you to gamble in the State lotteries.

The streets that proceed from the Puerta del Sol are all respectable without being magnificent. Some think that of Alcalá even magnificent, with its handsome shops and offices, its increasing breadth, and its fashionable vivacity. It certainly ends with conspicuous pomp among the palaces in which Spain's State affairs are mismanaged. The verdure of the park—a glorious evergreen—begins where it ends; and the stately triumphal arch at the corner of the park hints at Spain's earlier greatness, and the crowds that pass under it Sunday after Sunday in the summer towards the bull-ring. Madrid's beggars seem to like the neighbourhood of the Alcalá, and they ought to be good judges. Here they ask with the politest air for '*Otro real, señor!*' ('Another threepenny-bit, sir!'), and in the streets and church-porches they sit in social groups, with their mendicancy-badges at the neck, smoking cigarettes, criticising the devout, voluble or silent, eager to be profusely thankful for the gift of a copper or profusely acrimonious for the refusal of one. If, as a professional man, you decide to live in this street, you must be prepared to pay two or three hundred pounds per annum for a mere flat of five or six rooms.

One soon understands Madrid's most inveterate vice. She was forbidden by her kings in the past to spread. The consequence is that she has grown perforce skywards. Her older streets are very dismal, malodorous passages, and you may guess at the multitude of inhabitants to each towering house by the multitude of washed linens and other picturesque garments which decorate the balconies, one above the other, and the very roofs of the houses, a hundred feet and more over the tiresome stones of the street. Small rooms are a natural sequel to this state of things. Even at reputable hotels they thrust their guests into bedchambers of quite penitential dimensions, with any sort of a prospect—some

worse than none. The staircases are like pit-shafts, and the atmosphere suffers for the same reason. This is so in some of the quarters where foreigners are lodged. What it is like in the muddled rookeries between the Plaza Mayor and the Toledo Gate, where one can scarcely see the sky for the network of overhanging clothes, one prefers to imagine rather than investigate. The old part of Madrid is an extraordinarily perplexing settlement. You may wander for hours among its alleys, coming now and again to tiny little squares, each with a statue in its midst and a café named after the statue; and the more you try, with or without direction, to get free of the alleys and strike some main lung of the town, the more hopelessly you seem to be lost. There is something rather eerie, too, as well as baffling, in the solitude of many of these hand's-breadth streets, with their ancient shrines and ancient escutcheons (showing what the old nobility were content to put up with!), to say nothing of their extremely ancient smells. Life is as safe here from marauders as in any other European capital; but one cannot help feeling mightily suspicious of the atmosphere in these neglected slums.

Indeed, Madrid is not reckoned a healthy town. It is, of course, very cold in winter when the wind is from the Guadarramas, which make such a menacing scrawl on the horizon to the north; and in summer the heat is often terrific. Even in spring, we are told by the local humorists, it is advisable to wear furs and carry a small brazier, especially in the churches. Expatriated Britons in Madrid have no worse words for March in London than for March in Madrid: this too, if they are to be believed, without prejudice. But, at any rate, away from the stagnant parts of the old town one may rely on a certain amount of invigorating air; and, for all its cramp, no European capital has more enchanting gardens than those of the Madrid public park. This in May yields quite blissful hours among its flowers, fountains, and fir groves. Though hardly more than a stone's-throw from the traffic of the fashionable quarter of the town, one's surroundings are here supremely rural; nor is the hand of the landscape gardener obtrusively displayed. But in the same month it often rains on these uplands with astonishing fury. Caught in the Royal Picture Gallery one morning by one such downpour, I joined a group of liveried officials and watched the gargoyles in a courtyard of the building cascading upon the nether pavement.

'Would it might drown Cuba!' said one of the men, in an unpatriotic burst, when a comrade mentioned the war news of the morning. But the others did not go so far as that. They too cursed the island, which had, I gathered, had some official effect upon their salaries. They were otherwise content that the bursting gargoyles should flood the mildewed, weedy courtyard, and save them the trouble of giving it a spring cleaning. After

the May showers Madrid looks nothing less than charming, especially if you view the mass of its pale-red roofs from any of the high ground by the *pelota* hall above the Botanical Gardens. Then, too, if ever, the environing wilderness puts on a tender down of green which makes one think better of this corner of Old Castile than it deserves.

One expects in these times of national misfortune (though, in truth, for a century or two Spain has known little prosperity) to find in Madrid strong signs of the wear and tear of the Cuban affliction. No such thing in fact. The town eats and drinks, and goes to mass and the bull-fights just as cordially as if Cuba were a proper tribute-paying part of the realm. The people have been brought up on that valuable word 'Patience!' nor is it in the national temperament to vex itself about an evil that has already become familiar.

Certainly in the cafés there is rhetoric enough, if you go to the right ones. As the sleepy-faced little boys who retail the papers swing into these resplendent halls with fresh editions, the papers are snatched from them, and the telegrams absorbed with something of the emotion and ebullient ardour that one has been taught to expect in the children of the South. But one soon tires of the lip-wisdom of these coffee-politicians. The sleepy-faced little boys do not wink an eyelash even when a perspiring enthusiast shouts words in denunciation of the royal family and all the ministers; nor does the calm and rather scout proprietor, who views his crowds of customers from his snug bureau in the middle of the room, retort one word in objection. Spain seems to have learnt the lesson that mere speech is of little or no account. Even the journals of the capital are allowed to be very rude to those in high office. Deeds are quite another matter. But when certain restive spirits fidget with their hands and proclaim their anger about the nation's impotence, they are promptly reminded by the press that of late years all Spain's campaigns have been protracted affairs, and that it is almost treasonable to be in a hurry. The national spirit is better exemplified by a memorable old lady in a veil whom one night at eleven o'clock I beheld enter a large café near the Puerta del Sol, and who, after a modest drink of syrup and water, composed herself to sleep among the rather noisy men around her, and was thus sleeping, elegantly, with folded hands, when I left the place just before midnight. Spain would fain continue the long sleep in which she has been plunged for many decades of years. Only her people can appreciate the pain and annoyance caused her by the rude awakening at the hands of those unsympathetic persons who compose the United States of America.

But to return to Spain's capital. The largest building in it is the royal palace, and then come the hospitals. The palace is far too pretentious for a country that has almost given up hopes of ever living within its means. Spain's Queen-Regent, however,

is less pretentious than her and her little son's town house. I shall not soon forget her kindly words one Sunday morning after mass in the gilded palace chapel, when a tattered old peasant woman from the *campo* stretched out her hands as her Majesty passed by, and gave her a sort of blessing. Seen kneeling in state before the altar in white silk and diamonds, and (one fancied) with a very large sense of her human value, she scarcely gripped the affections, though her deportment excited admiration for its dignity. The whispers from the crowd who had wrestled into the space allotted to them were more in dispraise of the strange uncomeliness of the ladies in waiting and the officiating clergy, and the very broad backs of the soldiers of the guard. But afterwards, when the Queen smiled at us like any peasant woman herself, and nodded with no affectation of dignity at all, and even condescended to address these few genial words to the most excited of her subjects present—evidently without the least thought or care for daggers or dynamite—then one understood a little why Madrid talks of her as 'Cara Reina!'

That same afternoon, however, in the royal courtyard, whither I went to enjoy the outlook over the white balustrade at the lawny country to the south, Spain excited a little laughter. There was a small brass cannon near, with the word 'Sevilla' on it, and the date 1884. I inspected the antiquity without enthusiasm, and was with great promptitude interfered with. 'You are not permitted to look at the artillery, and neither may you smoke in its vicinity!' said the warrior on guard. One could not but withdraw smiling, although the object in frowns and pipeclay seemed to threaten active opposition. We might as well forbid foreigners in London to cast their eyes upon the clumsy ordnance taken from Russia in the Crimea. But this is the dear South all over: having lost the substance of greatness, it must, for its own pride's sake, claim a sort of respect for the shadow thereof.

One of the odd features of life in Madrid these many months past is the distribution of leaflets in all parts of the town, inviting you to volunteer for Cuba. The practice was licensed in January 1896. On the surface, the inducements to

serve seem fair. Whether you are a bachelor, a widower, or a married man, you will be welcome, if you are between nineteen and forty years old. Half-a-crown a day until you are affiliated, two pounds down when you embark, and ten pounds a year (which may be paid to your family if you prefer it) while you serve are the conspicuous inducements on these leaflets. No doubt they have done a certain amount of national work, for I have caught a parish priest in a country town of the Peninsula rubbing his nose very viciously while he read the latest of them (a pale pink trifle), just stuck by some meddling agent upon his very church door. But one should go to Cornma, if not to Cuba itself, to see the reverse side of this ensnaring picture. Meanwhile, as a stimulant to the very just wrath (as it is esteemed) of Spain against the United States, Madrid has for long been selling in its streets, at a penny each, ugly black cardboard rodents termed 'Yankee Rats.' According to the measure of your patriotism, if a Spaniard, you may either put your heel on the cardboard rat, or merely play with it, realising your superiority to it.

Madrid is not a town to visit with a large measure of anticipations; but no foreigner in Spain will understand the country unless he idles a little in the Puerta del Sol. The national museums are nothing like what they would be if the nation itself had not been ruthlessly pillaged by the French and its own members. Nevertheless, they have kept much that is unique. The royal armoury is a matchless institution, and Murillo's sweetest faces are still in Spain and Madrid. But, after all, it is the people one comes to see, and these will not disappoint. Lounging in the Puerta del Sol, one may view all Spain's costumes go by with the jingling of the tram-mules' bells, and, better still, the faces that animate the costumes.

Judged on this showing, at a venture one may say that there is still abundance of latent power in the country's inhabitants. Who doubts this, however? Since the time of Charles the Fifth, Spain has not lacked worthy children, but worthy administrators of her estate and guides for her people. For these she continues to wait and pray.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

CHAPTER XXIV.—I HEAR NO GOOD IN THE INN AT THE FORDS O' CLYDE.

FOR a second I was so filled with despair at Master Veitch's news that my mind was the veriest blank, and I could get no thought save that bitterest of all—that my lady was gone. But with a great effort I braced myself to action.

'And what of my servant Nicol?' I asked, and waited breathlessly for the answer.

'Oh, he was away on the hills seeking ye, Master Burnet. When he got no word, Marjory was in sic a terror that nothing would suffice her but that he maun off to Tweeddale and seek every heather-buss for word o' ye. He hadna been gone twae days when half-a-dozen men, or maybe more, came, wi' horse and a', and a letter frae you yersel', seekin' the lass. They said that a' was peaceably settled now, and that you had

sent them to fetch her to meet you at Lanerick. I hadna a thocht but that it was a' richt, and neither had the lass, for she was richt blithe to gang. Next day—that was yestreen—here comes your servant, Nicol, wi' a face as red as a sodger's coat, and when he finds Marjory gone he sits doon wi' hisheid atween his hands and spak never a word to ony man. Then, about the darkening, he gets up and eats a dinner as though he hadna seen meat for a twal'month. Then off he gangs, and tells na a soul where he's gaun.' The old man had lost all his fine bearing and correct speech, and stood by the door shivering with age and anxiety.

A whirlwind of thoughts passed through my mind. Now that the old order was at an end, Gilbert's power had gone with it, and he was likely to find it go hard with him soon. There was but one refuge for him—in his own lands in the west, where, in his great house of Eaglesham or his town dwelling in Glasgow, he might find harbourage; for the very fact that they were in the very stronghold of the Whigs made them the more secure. Thither he must have gone if he had any remnant of wit, and thither he had taken my lady. And, with the thought, my whole nature was steeled into one fierce resolve to follow him and call him to bitter account. My first fit of rage had left me, and a more deadly feeling had taken its place. This earth was too narrow a place for my cousin and me to live in, and somewhere in these westlands I would meet him and settle accounts once and for all. It was not anger I felt, I give you my word. Nay, it was a sense of some impelling fate behind driving me forward to meet this man who had crossed me so often. The torments of baffled love and frustrated ambition were all sunk in this one irresistible impulse.

I clambered on my horse once more; and a strange sight I must have seemed to the gaping servants and their astonished master.

'I am off on the quest,' I cried; 'but I will give you one word of news ere I go. The king has fled the land and the Dutch William goes to the throne.' And I turned and galloped down the avenue, leaving a throng of pale faces staring after my horse's tail.

The dull November eve came on me ere I reached the Clyde. 'Twas no vantage to ford the stream, so I rode down the left bank among damp haughs and great sedgy pools. In a little I had come to the awful gorge where the water foams over many linn, and the roar of the place is like the guns of an army. Here I left the stream-side and struck into the country, whence I returned again nearly opposite the town of Lanark, at the broad, shallow place in the river which folk call the Fords o' Clyde.

Here there is a clachan of houses jumbled together in a crinkle of the hill, where the way from the Ayrshire moors to the capital comes

down to the bank. Here there was an inn, an indifferent place, but quiet and little frequented; and, since there was little to be got by going farther, I resolved to pass the night in the house. So I rode down the uneven way to where I saw the light brightest, and found the hostel by a swinging lamp over the door. Giving my horse to a stableman with many strict injunctions as to his treatment, I entered the low doorway and found my way to the inn parlour.

From the place came a great racket of mirth; and as I opened the door a glass struck against the top and was shattered to pieces. Inside, around the long table, sat a dozen dragoons making merry after their boisterous fashion. One would have guessed little indeed from their faces that their occupation was gone, for they birked at the wine as if the times were twenty years back and King Charles (whom God rest!) just come anew to his throne.

I had never seen the soldiers before, but I made a guess that they were disbanded men of my cousin's company, both from their air of exceeding braggadocio which clung to all who had any relation to Gilbert Burnet, and also since there were no soldiers in this special part of the Clydesdale save his. I was in no temper for such a racket, and had there been another room in the house I should have sought it; but the inn was small and little frequented, and the accommodation poor at the best. I was still worn with my exertions of yesterday, and weary with long riding; so, shutting the door, I sought a retired corner-seat to get my limbs at rest.

But it was clear that three-fourths of the company were in the last state of drunkenness; and since men in liquor can never let well alone, they must needs begin to meddle with me.

'Gidden,' said one, 'what kind o' gentleman ha'e we here? I havena seen sic a fellow sin' yon steeple-jaick at Brochtoun Fair. D'ye think he wad be willin' to gi'e us a bit entertainment?'

Now you must remember that I still wore my suit of torn and dirty crimson, and with my stained face and long hair I must have cut a rare figure.

But had the thing gone no further than words I should never have stirred a finger in the matter; for when a man's energies are all bent upon some great quarrel he has little stomach for lesser bickerings. But now one arose in a drunken frolic and staggered over to where I sat, and plucked me rudely by the arm. 'Come ower,' he said, 'my man, and let'sh see ye dance the "Nancy kilt her coats." You see here twelve honest sodgers, whae will gi'e ye a penny a-piece for the play.'

'Keep your hands off,' I said brusquely, 'and hold your tongue. 'Twill be you that will do the dancing soon at the end of a tow on the Castlehill, when King William plays the fiddle. You'll be brisker lads then.'

'What!' says he in a second, with drunken gravity; 'do I hear you sheek treason against his Majesty King James? Dod, I'll learn ye better.' And he tugged at his sword; but being unable in his present state to draw it with comfort, he struck me a hard thwack over the shoulder, scabbard and all.

In a moment I was ablaze with passion. I flung myself on the fellow and with one buffet sent him rolling below the table. Then I was ashamed of myself, for a drunken man is no more fit for an honest blow than a babe or a woman.

But there was no time for shame or aught save action. Three men—the only three who were able to understand the turn of affairs—rose to their feet in a trice, and with drawn swords came towards me. The others sat stupidly staring, save two who had fallen asleep and rolled from their seats.

I picked up my chair, which was broad and heavy, and of excellent stout oak, and held it before me like a shield. I received the first man's awkward lunge full on it, and, thrusting it forward, struck him fair above the elbow, while his blade fell with a clatter on the floor. Meantime the others were attacking me to the best of their power; and though they were, singly, feeble, yet in their very folly they were more dangerous than a mettlesome opponent who will keep always in front and observe well the rules of the game. Indeed, it might have gone hard with me had not the door been flung violently open, and the landlord entered wringing his hands and beseeching, and close at his heels another man, very tall and thin and dark. At the sight of this second my heart gave a great bound, and I cried aloud in delight, for it was my servant Nicol.

In less time than it takes to write it, we had disarmed the drunken ruffians and reduced them to order. And, indeed, the task was not a hard one, for they were a vast deal more eager to sleep than to fight, and soon sank to their fitting places on the floor. Forbye, they may have had some gleam of sense, and seen how perilous was their conduct in the present regimen of affairs. Then Nicol, who was an old acquaintance of the host's, led me to another room in the back of the house, where we were left in peace, and, sitting by the fire, told one another some fragment of our tales.

And first for his own, for I would speak not a word till he had told me all there was to tell. He had had much ado to get to Caerleon, for the hills were thick with the military, and at that wild season of the year there is little cover. When he found no letter he set off for the hiding-place above Scrape, where he knew I had been, and found it deserted. Thence he had shaped his way again to Smitwood with infinite labour, and told Marjory the fruit of his errand. At this her grief had been so excessive that nothing would content her but that he must be off again and learn by

hook or crook some word of my whereabouts. So began his wanderings among the hills, often attended with danger and always with hardship, but no trace of me could he find. At last, somewhere about the Moffat Water, he had forgathered with a single tinker whom he had once befriended in the old days when he had yet power to help. From this man he had learned that the Baillies had with them one whom he did not know for certain, but shrewdly guessed, as the laird of Barns. With all speed he had set off on this new quest, and followed me in my journey right to the moss of Biggar. Here all signs of the laird came to an end, for most of the folk of the place knew nought of the airt of the gipsy flight, and such as knew were loath to tell, being little in a mood to incur the Baillies' wrath. So nought was left for him but to return to the place whence he had started. Here he was met with the bitter news that I have already set down. He was thrown into a state of utter despondency, and sat for long in a fine confusion of mind. Then he fell to reasoning. There was no place whither Gilbert could take a woman save his own house of Eaglesham, for Dawyck and Barns were too near the hills and myself. Now, if they took her to the west, they would do so with all speed; they had but one day's start; he might yet overtake them, and try if his wits could find no way out of the difficulty.

So off he set, and came to the inn of the Clyde fords, and then he heard that on the evening before, such a cavalcade as he sought had passed. But he learned something more, he went on—namely, that my cousin's power was wholly broken, and that now I was freed from all suspicion of danger. Once more he fell into a confusion; but the one thing clear was that he must find me at all costs. He had heard of me last at the town of Biggar, not fifteen miles off; when I heard the great news he guessed that I would ride straight for Smitwood; I would hear the tidings that the folk there had to tell; and, if he knew aught of me, I would ride straight, as he had done, on the track of the fugitives. So he turned back to the inn, and abode there awaiting me, and lo! at nightfall I had come.

Then for long we spoke of my own wanderings, and I told him many tales of my doings and sufferings up hill and down dale, as did Ulysses to the Ithacan swineherd. But ere long we fell to discussing that far more momentous task which lay before us. It behoved us to be up and doing, for I had a horrid fear at my heart that my cousin might seek to reach the western sea-coast and escape to France or Ireland, and thus sorely hinder my meeting with my love. I had no fear but that I should overtake him sooner or later, for fate had driven that lesson deep into my heart, and to myself I said that it was but a matter of days or weeks, or maybe years, but not of failure. I was for posting on even at that late hour, but Nicol would have none of it.

'Look at your face i' the gless, sir,' said he, 'and tell me if ye look like muckle mair ridin' the day. Ye're fair forwandered wi' weariness and want o' sleep. And what for wad ye keep thae queer-like claes? I'll get ye a new suit frae the landlord, decent man, and mak' ye mair presentable for gaun intil the wast.'

I looked, as he bade me, in the low mirror, and saw my dark face and wind-tossed hair, and my clothes of flaming crimson. Something in the odd contrast struck my fancy.

'Nay,' I said grimly, 'I will bide as I am. I am going on a grim errand, and I will not lay aside these rags till I have done that which I went to do.'

'Weel, weel, please yersel,' said my servant jauntily, and he turned away, whistling and smiling to himself.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—AN OLD JOURNEY WITH A NEW ERRAND.

I SLEPT like a log till the broad daylight on the next morn woke, and with all speed I got up and dressed. My weariness was gone, and the dull languor which had oppressed me had given place to a singular freshness of spirit.

When I went below I found my servant ready and waiting, with the horses saddled and my meal prepared. The soldiers had gone early, paying no score, for when their liquor had left them they had wakened up to the solemn conviction that this country-side was not like to be a pleasant habitation for them for many months to come. So they had gone off, to Heaven knows where, cutting my bridle-rein as a last token of their affection.

It was near ten o'clock ere we started, the two of us, on our road to the west. I had travelled it many times, for it was the way to Glasgow; and I found myself calling up, whether I would or no, a thousand half-sad and half-pleasing memories. Had I not looked at my comrade every now and then, I might have fancied that I was still the schoolboy, with his wide interest in letters and life, and little knowledge of either, and with half-a-dozen letters in his pocket, looking forward with fear and hope to town and college. Heigh-ho! many things had come and gone since then, and here was I still the same boy, but ah, how tossed and buffeted and perplexed! Yet I would not have bartered my present state for these careless and joyous years; for, after all, this is a rugged world, with many sore straits and devilish temptations, but with so many fair and valiant rewards that a man is a coward indeed who would not battle through the one for the sweet sake of the other.

'Nicol,' said I after a long silence, 'you know the errand we go on. I have told you of it, I think. It is to find my cousin and Mistress Marjory. If God grant that we do so, then these are my orders:

You shall take the lady home to Tweeddale, to Dawyck, which is her own, and leave me behind you. I may come back or I may not. If I do, all will be well. If I do not, you know your duty. You have already fulfilled it for some little time; if it happens as I say, you shall continue it to death. The lass will have no other protector than yourself.'

'E'en as ye say,' cried he, resuming his hilarity, though whether it was real or no I cannot tell. 'But dinna crack aboot siccan things, laird, or ye'll be makkin' our journey nae better than a buryin'. It's a wanchancy thing to speak aboot death. No' that a man should be feared at it, but that he should keep a calm sough till it come. Ye mind the story o' auld Tam Blacket, the writer at Peebles. Tam was deen', and as he was a guid auld man, the minister, whae was great at deathbeds and consolation, can' to speak to him about his latter end. "Ye're near death, Tammas," says he. Up gets auld Tam. "I'll thank ye no' to mention that subject," he says; and never a word wad he allow the puir man to speak.'

In the town of Hamilton we alighted for dinner at an inn which bears for its sign the 'Ship of War,' though what this means in a town many miles from the sea I do not know. Here we had a most excellent meal, over which we did not tarry long, for we sought to reach Glasgow ere nightfall, and at that season of the year the day closes early.

As we rode down the narrow, crooked street I had leisure to look about me. The town was in a ferment, for, near the field of Bothwell Brig, where the Whigs had suffered their chiefest slaughter, it had been well garrisoned with soldiers, and the news of the Prince of Orange's landing put the place into an uproar. Men with flushed, eager faces hurried past with wonder writ large on their cheeks; others stood about in knots talking shrilly; and every now and then a horseman would push his way through the crowd, bearing fresh tidings to the townsfolk or carrying it thence to the west-country.

Suddenly in the throng of men I saw a face which brought me to a standstill. It was that of a man, dark, sullen, foreign-looking, whose former dragoon's dress a countryman's coat poorly concealed. He was pushing his way eagerly through the crowd, when he looked into the mid-street and caught my eye. In an instant he had dived into one of the narrow closes and was lost to sight.

At the first glance I knew my man for that soldier of Gilbert's, Jan Hamman, the Hollander, whom already thrice I had met—once in the Alphen Road, once at the joining of the Cor Water with Tweed, and once at the caves of the Cor, where so many of his Majesty's servants went to their account. What he was about in this west-country I could not think, for had he been wise he would have made for the eastern seacoast, rather than venture into this strong-

hold of those he had persecuted. And with that thought another came. Had not he spoken bitterly of his commander? Was he not the victim of one of my cousin's many infamies? Had he not in my own hearing sworn vengeance? Gilbert had more foes than one on his track, for here was this man, darkly malevolent, dogging him in his flight. The thought flashed upon me that he of all men would know my cousin's plans, and would aid me in my search. I did not for a moment desire him for an ally in my work; nay, I should first frustrate his designs before I settled matters with Gilbert, for it was in the highest degree unseemly that any such villain should meddle in matters which belonged solely to our house. Still, I should use him for my own ends, come what might.

I leaped from my horse, crying on Nicol to take charge of it, and dashed up the narrow entry. I had just a glimpse of a figure vanishing round the far corner, and when I had picked my way, stumbling over countless obstacles, I found at the end an open court, roughly paved with cobblestones, and beyond that a high wall. With all my might I made a great leap and caught the top; and lo! I looked over into a narrow lane wherein children were playing. It was clear that my man had gone by this road, and would now be mixed among the folk in the side street. It was useless to follow farther, so in some chagrin I retraced my steps, bawling Nicol and the Dutchman and my own ill-luck.

I remounted, making no answer to my servant's sarcastic condolences—for of course he had no knowledge of this fellow's purport in coming to

the westlands, and could only look on my conduct as a whimsical freak. As we passed down the street I kept a shrewd lookout to right and left if haply I might see my man, but no such good luck visited me. Once out of the town, it behoved us to make better speed, for little of the afternoon remained, and dusk at this time of year fell sharp and sudden. So, with a great jingling and bravado, we clattered through the little hamlets of Blantyre and Cambuslang, and came just at the darkening to the populous burgh of Rutherglen, which, saving that it has no college or abbey, is a more bustling and prosperous place than Glasgow itself. But here we did not stay, being eager to win to our journey's end; so, after a glass of wine at an inn, we took the path through the now dusky meadows by Clydeside, and passing through the village of Gorbals, which lies on the south bank of the river, we crossed the great bridge and entered the gates just as they were on the point of closing.

We alighted for the night at the house of that Mistress Macmillan where I lodged when I first came to college. She welcomed us heartily, and prepared for us a noble supper, for we were hungry as hawks, and I for one was tired with many rough adventures. The house stood in the Gallow Gate, near to the Saltmarket and the college gardens; and as I lay down on the fresh sheets and heard the many noises of the street, with the ripple of the river filling the pauses, I thanked God that at last I had come out of beggary and outlawry to decent habitation.

(To be continued.)

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.



LD chemical text-books refer to three elements which were only known in the ætiform condition—oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen. These three had, up to twenty years ago, resisted all attempts to liquefy them.

Then two of these so-called permanent gases yielded to cold and pressure, and were reduced, in small quantities, to liquid form. There was a doubt about hydrogen. It was liquefied theoretically, but the result was merely the bedewing of a glass vessel. Recently, however, hydrogen has been unmistakably reduced to the liquid form by Professor Dewar, who was able to show an ounce or two of the element. Its boiling-point is about two hundred and forty degrees below the zero of the centigrade scale, a degree of cold which can be better appreciated when it is stated that an empty glass vessel placed in the liquid was quickly filled with solid air! The liquefaction of hydrogen is a great achievement; and although we cannot foresee any direct commercial advantage from it, there is no doubt that it will put

in the hands of chemists an agent which will be valuable in many lines of research.

SUBMARINE PHOTOGRAPHY.

Novelists are very fond of describing the beauties of the submarine world, with its wealth of vegetable and animal growth of the most gorgeous tints. We may presume that they base their conclusions upon what may be seen of the rocky bed of the sea from a boat, or from their study of an artificial aquarium, for very little can be seen by a diver immersed in the water. Fishes whose eyes are adapted to the medium in which they live must presumably see farther into the water than can human beings; but still it may be imagined even their vision is most limited. Attempts to take photographs in sea-water have been made over and over again, and some of the results obtained by Professor Boutan have recently been published. This gentleman dons a diving-dress and takes with him a water-tight camera to the bottom of the sea, sets the instrument up on a tripod stand, and works as leisurely as if

he were on dry land. The results are hardly commensurate with the trouble taken in obtaining them. Much more valuable records have recently been obtained by Mr Saville-Kent, who photographs in air, but with his camera pointing downwards through the water. Several of his pictures were recently exhibited, and we mention, among the more interesting, studies of sea anemones, Australian jelly-fish, and, most curious of all, a family of newly-hatched turtles indulging in their first swim.

THE CONGO RAILWAY.

The completion of the Congo railway, which has taken ten years to accomplish, is an event which is worthy of record, for this is not only a railway, but a way to the civilisation of some thirty-five millions of human beings. The enterprise is due to the Belgians, and, though the success of the Congo Free State has been far from being triumphant, it is remarkable as the first and only attempt at colonisation ever undertaken by that people. The railway is a great achievement, for the natural obstacles were many in number, the climate at many parts of the route so deadly that the workmen perished by the hundred, and the scarcity of water and food supplies led to much suffering. The line is single, and is two hundred and thirty miles in length; in its course it offers examples of all kinds of engineering difficulties in the way of tunnels, bridges, and deep cuttings through hard rock. This railway brings the Atlantic Ocean and the Lower Congo within reach of three thousand miles of navigable waterways, and thus opens up to European commerce a million square miles of country which before was quite shut out from communication. The foresight and enterprise which conceived and carried out the idea of this African railway is not likely to go unrewarded. In an early issue of this *Journal* the Rev. W. H. Bentley, of the Congo Baptist Mission, will give an account of a trip on this railway.

COMBATING THE TSE-TZE FLY.

All have heard of the ravages of the terrible Tse-tze fly of Africa, which is so fatal to cattle and horses that none of these animals can approach with impunity the so-called 'fly-belt' where the dreaded insects congregate. This belt commences about one hundred miles from the coast, and extends for about the same distance up-country, and the reinforcements recently sent to Uganda to quell the mutiny which broke out among the Soudanese troops were compelled to cross it. In order to protect their ponies two officers of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers hit upon the device of dressing the animals up in specially constructed garments, which gave them a most comical appearance, resembling the pantomimic creatures seen on the stage at Christmas-time. First, the ponies were swathed in bands of straw, on the top of

which came coat and trousers of cloth dipped in oil and iodoform. It was necessary thus to raise the material from actual contact with the hide of the animals, for the Tse-tze fly can pierce ordinary cloth. It will be interesting to learn whether the ponies thus protected went unscathed through the terrible 'fly-belt,' for the experimental clothing, if effectual, may lead to the introduction of some material which may come into regular employment for the same object.

RELICS OF BUDDHA.

Some remarkable Buddhist antiquities recently discovered in India have been described in the *Allahabad Pioneer* by Mr Vincent Smith, a well-known antiquary. Some years ago the discovery of an inscribed pillar, erected in the third century, indicated with certainty the site of Kapilavastu, the home of Gautama Buddha, who lived about 500 B.C. The ruins of this ancient city are now covered by jungle, but are being excavated, and thus buildings more ancient than any previously known in India are being brought to light. Another discovery, also in Nepalese territory, close to the British frontier, is that of a brick tumulus containing relics of Buddha himself. These are fragments of bone, in a decayed wooden vessel, with which were found five small vases of soap-stone and a very fine bowl of rock-crystal, all containing gold ornaments, pearls, and precious stones, besides various objects delicately wrought in crystal and agate. This wonderful collection was deposited in a massive coffer of sandstone, buried under eighteen feet of masonry. An inscription on one of the vases states that the relics are those of the Buddha, and indicates that the tumulus was constructed about 300 B.C.

POULTRY-FARMING.

Once more the attention of farmers and others is being called to the vast sums of money which we in this country are paying away to foreigners for produce which might well be raised at home. Mr Gurney, the British consul at Cherbourg, who last year discussed the subject at length, again returns to it in a recent report. More than this, he has sent some notes on poultry-raising for profit—which we trust our home authorities will see the wisdom of circulating widely—in which he points out the conditions necessary for success, with advice as to feeding, breeding, and artificial incubation. He tells us that last year Britain paid France more than a million sterling for eggs, and nearly as much to Germany and Russia. Belgium received more than three-quarters of a million, and Denmark more than half-a-million, for the same description of produce. Including other countries, the total imports of eggs amounted to four and a quarter millions sterling. Cottagers and labourers, as well as farmers, are urged to turn their attention in this direction, and it is certain that by following

Mr Gurney's advice they would soon make the industry profitable.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA.

'Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war.' And what may be described as a splendid conquest is the recent concession to a British syndicate of the enormous coalfield, two hundred and fifty miles long by forty miles wide, which lies in the province of Shan-si, less than three hundred miles distant from Peking. As well as a commercial victory, it is a conquest over superstition, for the chief obstacle to the business being concluded was the existence of an old Chinese edict, which forbade digging to a greater depth than thirty feet in case certain subterranean dragons should be let loose. For many years this gigantic coalfield, with its rich stores of iron and limestone, has been known and coveted by different European powers, and its opening up is bound to give immense prestige to the nation finding the necessary capital. It was calculated by an expert in 1882 that this coalfield could supply the whole world with fuel for two thousand one hundred years at the rate of consumption then prevalent. In return for obtaining full powers to exploit the minerals, to construct necessary railway lines, and to import machinery duty free, the syndicate will pay the Chinese authorities a royalty of 25 per cent. on the profits; the arrangement to hold good for sixty years. It is said that large quantities of petroleum are also to be found in this district, and that gold is also to be had; but the chief efforts of the new syndicate will be turned towards the mining of coal and iron in what are probably the richest fields yet discovered. See an article on 'The Mineral Riches of China' in this *Journal* for March.

WASTED GAS.

To leave gas-jets and gas-fires burning at all times, day and night, simply to save matches and avoid the trouble of relighting, would seem to be a fatuous as well as a most wasteful proceeding, which would hardly commend itself to anybody save perhaps the director of the gas company benefited by the act. Yet this is what has been going on for a long time in some of the natural-gas districts of the United States. The gas, being a gift from the earth, and not a product of the retort, which must be paid for, is not valued as it should be, and posterity would have to suffer unless this wanton waste were stopped. In Indiana a local court had decided that no action could lie, for a man had a right to do what he liked with his own; but the supreme court has reversed this decision, and declared the wanton waste illegal, as being against the general public good. According to *Cassier's Magazine*, the waste of natural-gas has been of the most reckless character, in some cases the vapour being burnt as a flare from the open ends of pipes

without burners. It is believed that the action of the supreme court in checking this extravagance will cause the wells to yield for an indefinite period instead of being soon exhausted.

THE EVILS OF TRAWLING.

Mr F. Comyn, who at one time acted as expert to the Fishery Board for Scotland, has recently written to the *Times* on the above subject, and it is to be hoped that his words will lead to remedial legislation. He gives first of all a description of the common trawl-net, and then shows how it scrapes up from the sea-bottom shellfish, stones, silt, seaweed, wreckage, and unfortunately immense numbers of immature fish, which are crushed or smothered in the net, and are subsequently thrown overboard with the other rubbish harvested by this horrible angling implement. Some years ago Mr Comyn's remonstrances resulted in the construction of a new form of trawl, which took as many full-sized fish as the ordinary net, but let the small fry escape, and it brought up with it no dirt or stones. This was tested by the Fishery Board at Granton with its steam trawler, with the result just stated; but, when offered to the trawlers, it, being something new, did not meet with approval. Mr Comyn now recommends that a fair trial should be made of both systems, and says that 'two large steam trawlers of equal power and tonnage working side by side, one with the ordinary net, the other with what may be described as the "discriminating" net, would yield more exhaustive, accurate, and unbiassed information than a score of Royal or Departmental Commissions, at a tithe of their cost.' He urges that experiments should be undertaken in this direction at the government expense, more especially because this country has done little or nothing for the fisheries, although it has sought to control them outside its own jurisdiction.

UNLOADING A SHIP BY SUCTION.

An interesting public exhibition was lately given in the Albert Dock, London, of a comparatively new and very rapid method of transferring bulk wheat from a ship into barges. The vessel *Chicago*, which belongs to the London Grain Elevator Company, and is fitted with pneumatic machinery invented by Mr F. E. Duckham of Millwall, was moored alongside the grain-ship *Minnewaska*, and from this ship's lower hold the grain was delivered into the barges at the rate of one hundred and thirty-five tons per hour. The chief feature of the apparatus is a cylindrical tank which is partly exhausted of air, from which a number of flexible suction tubes can be carried to any place in the grain-ship. On its way from ship to barge the wheat passes through automatic weighing-machines, and is not touched by hand at any stage of the process. The same system is in operation at Hamburg, Stettin, Limerick, and

some few other places, and is considered to be the most perfect method of unloading wheat which has yet been devised. It may be mentioned that the *Chicago* was built by Messrs Ramage & Ferguson of Leith.

ELECTRIC LAMP PRECAUTIONS.

We have more than once commented in these columns upon the not too well-known fact that electric glow-lamps are sufficiently hot to char and fire an inflammable substance with which they may be placed in contact. There is a prevalent idea that such lamps give off no heat; but this is far from being correct; indeed, in Germany so many fires have occurred in shop-windows from placing goods in touch with these lamps that the police have issued a notice containing certain precautions which should be observed. All such lamps, they suggest, should be furnished with globes, shades, or wire guards, so that the lamps cannot themselves come into contact with goods, and in every case the covering should be so arranged that there is free access of air. In the case of arc-lamps, which will occasionally drop sparks of white-hot carbon, it is recommended that each lamp should be provided with a metal ash-tray. Lastly, all wires carried within shop-windows should be most carefully insulated.

MOTIVE-POWER FROM SEA-WATER.

It has long been the dream of inventors to find some means of turning to profitable account the millions of horse-power running to waste which are represented by the waves on the sea-shore, and many have tried to turn this intermittent motion into one which is constant and regular enough to work machinery. What seems to be a successful solution of the problem is described and illustrated in a recent issue of the *Scientific American*. The installation is at Potencia, California, and the plant has been erected by the Los Angeles Ocean Power Company. The apparatus comprises a pier, which extends three hundred and fifty feet into the sea, at the end of which are heavy floats of special construction, which rise with the waves, and as they fall they act directly upon the pistons of water-pumps. The pumps force the water through a check-valve into a reservoir on the shore which has an air-space above, and this air, as it becomes compressed, projects the water upon the buckets of a water-wheel, which it drives at a high rate of speed. The water-wheel is connected with a dynamo or

other machinery, and so far as the trial has gone it has proved to be a most economical way of obtaining power.

BEE-STINGS.

It is not perhaps generally known that certain bee-keepers, after a course of stinging by their honey-producers, acquire immunity from the poison, and will thereafter receive stings with the greatest equanimity. Others never become immune to the poison, and are obliged to avail themselves of the best remedies procurable. Dr Langer of Germany has been making inquiries as to the nature of these remedies, and has consulted a large number of bee-keepers on the question; but he does not seem to have gathered anything that was not known before. Ammonia in one of its forms—either liquid or any of its salts—is commonly used as an antidote to bee-stings. Permanganate of potash is effective when injected, but we should think that the inconvenience of such an operation would be quite as great as that caused by the sting itself. The old cottage-remedy—the blue-bag of the wash-house—is once more advocated as an effectual remedy, but is said not to be so good as ammonia. The same remarks apply to other insect-stings.

GERMAN INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISE.

The systematic way in which our German competitors go to work in finding fresh outlets for their industrial products is evidenced by a small exhibition, open only to traders, not to the general public, which was recently inaugurated at Berlin. It would seem that directly Germany acquired a territorial footing in China, she sent to the country a committee of experts, who were instructed to find out the particular commodities exported there from Europe and Japan, to ascertain whether Germany could not supply such goods at a cheaper rate, and to show the Teuton trader generally what he can profitably import into both China and Japan. Samples of the goods to which buyers were accustomed, with the prices affixed—such as underclothing of all kinds, shawls, blankets, and furniture stuffs—the Berlin manufacturer could see for himself at this exhibition, and could thus avoid the mistake that has been made over and over again of sending to a foreign country goods for which there was no demand. In a few weeks this collection will be split up and distributed among the manufacturing districts of the German Empire, so that this valuable object-lesson shall have a wide range of scholars.



THE BOATSWAIN'S CALL.

By ALAN OSCAR, Author of *Captain Kidd's Millions*, &c.

WHEN I received charge of a district in the coastguard service I met with many strange, silent old men of the coast, and heard many a wild story of the sea. Of the few local people who were possible as companions, the aged rector of Gillestone was one; he and I had many a ramble together and many a talk. He had many stories to tell of the closing years of the great wars; of daring smugglers and many other things. We had walked together to Aber Fach when he told me this one.

A wild place, Aber Fach, even on a summer's eve; but in a winter storm more terrible than death itself. To the east the coast rises in cliffs, and on the slope of the first can just be seen the cottages of Penmarch. Away inland lies Gillestone, hidden among trees. But here, all around, are dismal flats, broken now and again by rough sand-dunes covered with long, coarse spear-grass—the only thing which can live under the breath of a winter gale. Beyond the flats stretches a broad beach of limestone pebbles; again, beyond this, lie rugged, flat ledges of rock, which only show when the tide recedes, and which spread seaward half a mile.

An awful place to look upon, even—as I have said—on a summer's eve. You can fancy, even then, what an awesome place it must be when the huge breakers leap before the driving of the fierce storm—leap howling on that rocky ledge, rush up the stony beach, and, in receding, drag the thousand pebbles with them, raising a noise like rattling thunder.

On all this wide, wild expanse stood but one little hut—a thing that had once been a ship's round-house. Some of the ship's timbers lay about even yet; but this was the only part of her which stood intact.

'London Tom's house,' said my friend the rector.

'A man lives there?' cried I, in astonishment.

'He did till a few years ago. A strange old man, full of the ancient superstitions—if they are superstitions—and a wild Methodist. In my clerical capacity I was, in his eyes, tainted with the mark of the beast; but as a companion he received me, and I often brought him a little flask of brandy or some small comfort. He was past eighty when he died.'

'But what a place for a man to settle down in!' I said.

'Yes. Perhaps so. But he had his own wild reasons. Let me tell you the story here, now, with the very place before your eyes. Your sea-knowledge will make you able to picture the scene and the old man's tremendous exit. I saw all myself; and even now it awes me to think of it or tell it.

'It was in '13, when, as if we had not enough to do with European affairs, we must fight the American States. My old father—rector here before me—had lately sent me up to Jesus, and I was home for Christmas. What a wild place Oxford was in those days! Drinking, town-and-gown riots, badger-baiting, cock-fighting; but never mind that.

'We were so used to howling storms that, unless one of our smuggling luggers were expected, we seldom took note of weather, but sat snug and let it howl. Wrecks were rare; but when they did occur there was always good chance of plunder, and our coast-men were always on the lookout in such nights. This night it was roaring in the chimneys, and the Channel drizzle was driving up thick as a hedge. Father and I sat over our mulled port, and were thinking of bed, when, through the swish of the rain on the window and the howling of the gale, I heard a shout; then voices calling; then a hurried tramp of footsteps and a loud rapping at the door; and then, before I could jump to see who it was—for the maid was abed—in the fellow rushed. I met him in the hall. It was old Hoel, our man-of-all-work.

"Master Richard!" he gasped, flicking the wet from his eyes, "ship ashore, sir! Right on Breaksea Point! And it's dead low-water!"

'I was ready in a moment. Father would have come but that I strongly forbade him. We quickly felt our way down the dark, narrow lane and came out here, just where we stand. Having got used to the darkness, we found we could see better every moment. Then I remembered. It was full moon, and she was rising. Our heaviest gales come at full and change.

'There was a little crowd looking seaward; and soon, in the growing light, I saw, away beyond the beach, past the long stony reef, out in the roaring breakers, a dark patch. Even as I looked came a sharp tongue of flame, then the dull thud of their gun's report. No help could reach them out there; half a mile of a raging hell of broken surf divided them from land. We could only stand and look, hazarding opinions as to what she might be.

'I heard one ranting smuggler—John Morgans—shout in his fellow's ear: "She will be a ship-o'-war, yiss, sure! Wass because of her tall spars, look you!"

'And the other answered, with a curse, that he hoped better things—a Bristolman, now, with good freight.

'It was very terrible to see that dim object, the mere ghost of a ship, out there, and to know that living men stood on her decks spending their last awful moments. Any one of us—ay,

even the most callous wrecker there—would have risked his life for them, joyfully, had it been possible. But there was no *risk*—any attempt would have been instant death; for the incoming tide, crawling and thundering along the reef, would have dashed any man to pulp had he ventured there. In half-an-hour, if she drove farther up, we might possibly do something. (You know how quickly and how high our tides rise—forty feet in spring-tides with a westerly gale behind.) But would she last? There was little hope of it.

‘As I stood there with Hoel, staring full face out into the lashing rain and spray, I suddenly heard a bugle-call. Was it possible? Again! In a lull of the gale out rang the “assembly.” The last “ta-ra” swept by like the wail of a fleeing spirit. Hardly had it ended when a wicked squall drove up. When it had passed, when again the moon peered through the flying rack, the dark patch, which was a ship, had all but disappeared in the roaring breakers. And as I still stared seaward came a huge white wall of foam. It struck her! engulfed her! and when it swept by she was gone!’

‘Gasping shouts and groans went up.

“Ah! There, now! Diawl! She’s gone what-efter!” And then lower tones: “There’ll be wreckage in the morning indeed!”

‘In rushed the tide. Many standing there still hoped that some of the poor fellows might yet win to land alive; none of us thought of going home, for even if no men reached the shore salvage might sweep in.

‘Sure enough, presently came a dark object through the white waste of foam. It drove in slowly, now standing stationary a moment as it caught some stone in the reef, now surging inward, and ever swept by the fierce waves. At last it drove right up to the beach, and we all rushed down.

‘It was a huge fragment of the deck, with this round-house attached, and clinging within it were four men, one of whom carried a child in his arms. We quickly had them out; they were all dazed with their voyage across that awful mile of breakers—the child seemed dead. We had them up to the village, the man who held the child coming to my share. Ere we got him to the house he went faint and had to be carried. I took the child, who seemed to be a boy of about ten years. The other was a smart-looking fellow, with shaven face set in a fringe of black whisker, and with his hair tied in a queue—a fashion which had nearly died out. Round his neck, on a silver chain, hung a boatswain’s whistle.

‘We put them both to bed, Myfanwy, our maid, weeping and wailing over the little lad, who was dead. Presently, under the influence of warm blankets, and hot brandy forced between his clenched teeth, the man showed signs of recovery.

And suddenly he started up, shouting: “Here, sir! Ay, ay, sir!” I did not dream that these were the last words of sanity he would speak. And yet—I don’t know—the space between sanity and madness is so small that— But you shall judge for yourself.

‘The story of the wreck we learnt from the other survivors. The vessel was the *Pique*, a corvette armed *en flute*; she was running for Bristol with a sum in silver, valued at fifty thousand pounds, taken from a French transport. The gale had driven them out of their reckoning, and they fancied themselves in mid-Channel when they struck, for the soundings hereabout are no guide. London Tom was the boatswain. When hope seemed gone the commander had ordered him to call all hands aft, and the bugler to call the marines; this done, he harangued the crew, telling them that, as there was nothing to be done, it only remained for them to die like British sailors. He then gave Tom charge of his son, and ordered him for shelter into the round-house, for the seas were now flying over them.

“‘I stay here on deck with my men,” he said; “and if I die and you are saved, see that my boy is sent safely to his mother.”

‘He had hardly given this order when a huge wave swept the deck, carrying the house and its occupants with it.

It was sad work burying the poor dead fellows, for thirty bodies washed up; and sadder to see the pale, weeping, widowed mother who came to the funeral of her little son. But these things passed, and left us with Tom. He had taken up his abode in the round-house, which had been hauled up above high-water mark, and here he stuck.

‘He turned out a mild, harmless man, as many naturals are, and was a great friend of all our children. The villagers took him under their charge, fitted up his strange dwelling, and kept him provided with such simple food as they themselves used. I helped, of course. Presently we learnt that he had strange ways. At night, and especially at the full of the moon and in wild storms, he would wander along the sand-dunes, now and again winding his call—the call for “All hands”—“Teece—wit-it-it-it-it-it-it-it, Teece—whr-r-r-r-r-r—in.” Then he would lift his deep voice: “All ha—nds, ahoy!”

‘After such nights he would fasten the door of his house and stay in the whole day.

‘He became an attender at the little Methodist chapel, and in moments of excitement (the only times when he did become excited) would declaim against the Church, as also he would sometimes do in his talks with me; but we were good friends for all that. More than once I asked him about his nightly rambles.

“‘I’m waiting the captain,” he would reply. “He’ll come up from yonder one day, and he’ll ask me, ‘Tom,’ he’ll say, ‘where is Master

Charles?' and who but me can tell him? I shall say, 'He's gone on ahead, your honour; the Lord High Admiral Christ called him, and he couldn't wait for us.' The captain wouldn't believe no one else; 'cause why—he gave the lad into my charge. But when he sees me he'll know that all's well; and he'll know the old *Pique's* round-house; d'ye see?"

'And so Tom lived there, and never wandered away from these flats except to go to chapel and to see that the graves in the churchyard were cared for. God seems very tender to such as he. Not a soul round here would have harmed the old man; even the lads, the wildest, never teased him. I remember one collier boy, who came to visit a relation, made game of old Tom; the village lads set upon him and nearly killed him.

'One moonlit night something prompted me to go down to the beach and see Tom. He was not in his house, so I wandered along the sand-dunes, and presently saw him standing motionless on a little hillock. He took no notice of my approach, but stood staring out to sea. I spoke, asking, as many times before I had asked, why he stood there. He turned and spoke with even more than his usual solemnity:

"I've been called, sir; and they told me to get ready, for I should soon have to meet my commander."

"Who are *they*?" I asked.

"Those that sleep down there," he answered, pointing to where the ship had gone to pieces. "Those, and the others up in the churchyard. When I piped all hands to-night I heard them answer. And so I know that the captain will soon be coming, and he'll want to know where Master Charles is; then he'll want the hands turned up to muster, and I'll have to be here to call 'em. You don't know the discipline of a ship-o'-war, sir. When the commander-in-chief calls we must all answer together, smartly. All I'm sorry for is that them jollies won't have no bugler to blow the assembly for 'em. Poor chap, he lost the number of his mess with the rest. And yet I don't know. Perhaps he'll have his bugle ready—maybe. Any way they'll hear me wind my call."

'It made me creep to hear the strango old man talk thus. I seemed to hear Death calling him. I left him there and went home.

'The following night one of the villagers, who had been to see Tom, called and told me I was wanted down on the beach by the old man.

'I went. A gale was rising, and wailed mournfully in the air. The remembrance of the night of the wreck was strong upon me. As I walked down the moon rose—as on that terrible night, it was full.

'The old man was waiting, and was evidently in a state of excitement. He gave me no greeting, but began muttering, "They are calling me!"

"You wanted me, Tom?" I asked at length.

"Yes, sir," said he; "now that the time has come I feel afraid to meet the commander alone, and, somehow, I felt I would rather have you than the minister; you're a gentleman, and know what is due to an officer and a gentleman; and I don't think Christmas Elias" (that was his minister) "is quite used to the quality."

"But," said I, "do you really think, Tom, that the captain is to meet you to-night?"

"I know it, sir," he answered solemnly; and, mad or not, he greatly impressed me. "I'm all ready," he continued—"all ready to go with the rest of the hands. Come, sir! If you will be so kind." And he led the way out towards the sandhills.

'The moon had risen, but was now behind a low bank of cloud. The breakers were moaning; it was evident that a storm approached. It was nearly low-water, and a long stretch of beach and reef lay between us and the sea. I held back a bit. He paced forward by himself, mounting one of the sandy hillocks. There he stood, black against the brightening sky. Suddenly his shrill call rang out; then his hoarse shout: "All hands, ahoy!"

'It sent a cold shudder down my back. He turned and beckoned me.

"They're mustering," he whispered as I came up to him. "Look!" But I saw nothing. "Don't ye see 'em, sir?" he said, pointing seaward, with staring eyes.

Just then the moon emerged from the cloud which had overshadowed her, and struck the line of breakers, which, glinting in her beams, looked now like a row of champing, white-maned chargers at a halt.

"Captain! I'm here waiting orders!"

'The old man's voice rang out like a trumpet. He started, then again pointed seaward.

'And I—what had come over me? Had his intense spirit compelled me also? I shook with astonishment. In trembling wonder I stared. There, advancing like a wreath of mist across the dunes, came a figure in naval uniform! London Tom seemed to be talking to him.

"Yes, your honour! All present and sober. Pipe down? Ay, ay, sir."

'He wound a call on his whistle, one sharp "twit," followed by a long whirring note, then fell backward into my arms—dead.'

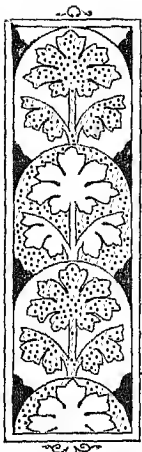
* * * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

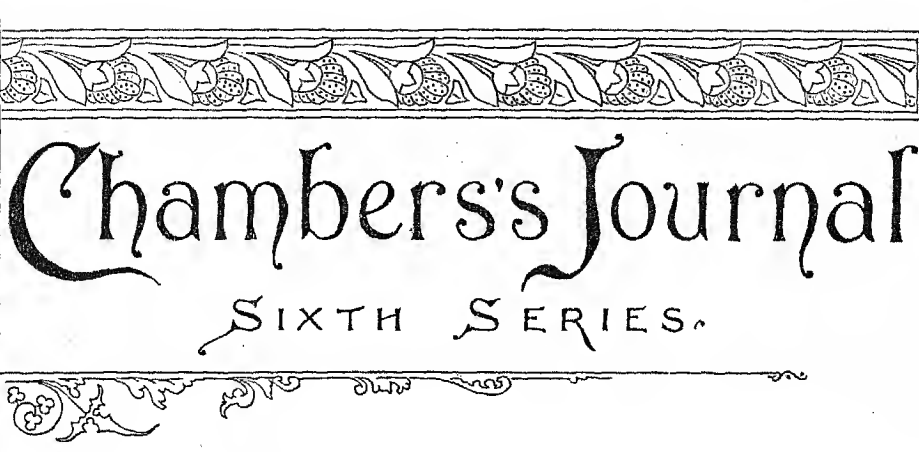
3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



QUEEN ELMA.

By ARCHIBALD EYRE, Author of *A Slight Mistake*.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IN the following pages I have endeavoured to prevent the identification of the individuals whose pains and passions form the subject-matter of this narrative, by giving feigned names both to persons and to places.

If, notwithstanding this precaution, any reader endowed with exceptional acumen guesses either wholly or in part that which I wish to hide, I would beg him to regard the discovery as a confidential matter between himself and me, if not for my sake, then for the sake of those high-born persons whom I have dared to limn on my canvases.

It was about the beginning of August in the year 189— that, after a solitary ramble, extending over a good many weeks, through a certain portion of Europe, I found myself within a few miles of the frontier of the little kingdom of Herzoglia. I determined to press on that same day to the capital, which, I discovered, was only ten miles across the frontier. I was influenced to this decision by the knowledge that my uncle, Lord Carton, was accredited to the Herzoglian court as British ambassador, and I felt that, as a dutiful nephew, I ought not to pass so near without pausing to pay my respects. I had therefore wired to him of my approaching advent; and, reflecting that the contents of my knapsack did not contain all the requisites for a visit to an ambassador, I had also wired to Vienna for some of my heavier baggage to be sent on.

Herzoglia is one of those petty states that are such obvious anachronisms in modern Europe. From its geographical position it concerned the interests of two at least of the Great Powers, for reasons which I cannot more particularly specify without risking the betrayal of what I wish to keep secret. These reasons are, however, of no importance so far as this narrative is concerned. It will be sufficient to say that at the time of which I am writing Herzoglia, small though it

was in point of size, boasted a queen, a court, and a standing army, and was the object of eager regard and anxious solicitude on the part of Russia and Austria.

It was, I remember, a hot afternoon. After leaving the telegraph office I wandered to the outskirts of the little frontier town, and flung myself down by the roadside, beneath the shadow of some trees. I looked idly round. Just opposite was a small chapel, dedicated, as I could see from the printed notices on the door, to a saint of unfamiliar name. In the porch stood the surpliced curé, gazing up and down the road. His eye caught mine, and he smiled affably.

'The heat is great,' he observed in German.

I assented, and would have continued the conversation if, with another glance along the road, he had not vanished abruptly into the interior of the chapel.

I wondered sleepily for whom he had been looking. The long white road, which I must shortly tread, lay before me like a great earthworm, twining its way through vineyards gently upwards until it was lost behind the sky-line. As I glanced along its weary length I saw a horseman appear, a little black speck against the blue sky. I watched him lazily as he galloped down the gentle slope, looking at first like a crawling fly on a piece of white ribbon, but gradually increasing in size until he reined his horse to a walking pace within a hundred yards. I fell to speculating as to his probable profession.

'Probably an officer,' I concluded, noticing his erect, soldierly carriage. He was dressed in civilian attire, and as he approached I could see the Herzoglian royal arms on the horse's bridle.

He stopped before the door of the chapel and dismounted. As he fastened his horse's reins to a hook on the wall I had a good opportunity of scrutinising his appearance. He was a tall young fellow, probably about twenty-five, with fair hair and

blue eyes and a frank, good-natured face. I should have called him singularly handsome if it had not been for a certain want of strength about his mouth, a defect which his slight moustache did not hide.

His eye fell on me.

'Good-morning. Perhaps you will be good enough to look to the mare while I am away? She is inclined to be restless.' He spoke somewhat peremptorily.

'Oh, certainly,' I responded, deciding it was not worth while resenting his off-hand manner.

He gave me a quick glance. 'You are not a native of these parts, I see.'

'No,' I replied. 'I am just passing through the town.'

'Of what country?'

'An Englishman.'

He looked at me thoughtfully. 'You belong to a great nation'—

'I know,' I answered lazily.

'Which possesses most of the essentials of the ideal race.'

I sat up. 'Most?' I asked. 'Not all?'

He looked at me smilingly.

'It may astonish you, but—not all.'

'What do we lack?'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'It is not a difficult question, but the answer would take too long. Besides, it would probably not convince you.'

'Go on,' I said briefly.

'To give two instances, then, you English have neither imagination nor a sense of humour.'

'To that I cannot agree.'

'I knew you would not believe me,' he answered, tolerantly. He had fastened his horse securely, and stood regarding me, with one arm thrown negligently across the saddle.

'These are small qualities, at any rate.'

'They eclipse the gaiety of your nation, notwithstanding.'

'We are a practical people,' I commenced, protestingly.

'Very,' he assented dryly. 'That is your chief virtue and your greatest defect.' Then he smiled again. 'You mustn't mind what I say,' he said half-apologetically, 'for in truth I think the English are the most remarkable people in the world—with one solitary exception.'

'And that is?'

He pointed in the direction he had come. 'Have you ever heard of the people of Herzogia?' he asked. Although there was laughter in his eyes, I think he spoke half-seriously. The next moment he nodded to me and disappeared within the chapel, leaving me curiously attracted by his personality, as one sometimes is even in the case of a passing stranger.

I lay still and smoked, speculating as to what his errand to the curé might be, until sleep nearly overpowered me. I was roused by the sound of wheels, and I discovered that a closed carriage had

drawn up before the door of the chapel. A young girl alighted.

'Wait for me at the inn, Fritz,' she said. 'I will go straight there from the confessional.'

The driver touched his hat clumsily, and, whipping up his horses, drove slowly on.

The girl turned as if to enter the chapel, when she noticed the first-comer's horse. She hesitated a moment, and then she went to the animal and put her arms round its neck.

'I wish you could speak,' I heard her whisper. 'Perhaps you could tell me if I am doing right.'

Then her eye fell on me. Her clear cheek flushed, and with a proud little air that charmed me mightily, she entered the chapel.

Sleep had fled utterly from me. The beauty of the girl would have driven a heavier drowsiness from a less susceptible nature than mine.

'I seem to have struck a romance,' I said to myself. 'Confessional indeed! Much that young lady will confess to-day!'

I looked longingly at the door of the chapel. Could I not also enter? It stood invitingly ajar. Although the sun was shining brilliantly, and my eye looked over miles of landscape, I felt as if I were shut out of the world, the only entrance to which was through the little chapel door, half-covered with printed notices.

'I suppose I mustn't,' I said, with a sigh. 'It's no business of mine.' To keep myself from temptation, I filled my pipe afresh.

My abstinence was rewarded, for at that moment the curé appeared at the door. He beckoned me with something of mystery in his air; I rose and crossed over to him with alacrity.

'Will you be so good,' he said, 'as to act as witness of a little ceremony that is to take place within?'

'Certainly,' I replied, with eagerness. The charmed portals were to be opened to me.

He shrugged his shoulders deprecatingly. 'Two young persons are to be married,' he said—'young persons of no consequence,' he added, looking at me from the corners of his eyes; 'and it happens there is no witness available at the moment.'

'It will be no trouble,' I responded, depressed at the thought that the pretty girl was so soon to be appropriated. 'Such a pretty girl, too!' I added, half-aloud.

The curé frowned a little. 'That is a matter on which I am not a competent judge,' he observed severely. 'Will you walk in?'

At his invitation I entered the little stuffy interior, round which hung gaudy pictures which were a pain to look upon. An odour of stale incense hung in the air. At the altar the couple I had seen enter the chapel were standing. I took up my position a little to the side, and the curé commenced the service.

When it was at an end the curé fetched a book, in which he made an entry, and the two having signed their names, he beckoned to me. He pointed

to a blank space on the page. The names of the newly-married couple were covered with a piece of blotting-paper, which I tried to brush aside; but the curé's forefinger was upon it.

'You sign there,' he said imperturbably, pointing to the allotted place, and I wrote my name without further ado.

'Who are they?' I asked carelessly when the pair had left the chapel. 'I suppose it is not a secret.'

The curé did not reply for a moment.

'Secret?' he said at length. 'Why should it be a secret? The girl is the daughter of a vintner in Lapsburg, and the man is a corporal in the Herzogian Guards.' He looked me calmly in the face as he said this, and I have seen nothing so blandly innocent as was his face at that moment.

'Really,' I said, a trifle disappointedly. 'I thought that young fellow was a gentleman.'

'It does not require a genealogy to make a gentleman,' responded the curé oracularly.

'The girl certainly looked well-born,' I said carelessly; 'but appearances are often deceptive.'

The curé did not reply. I bade him good-day, and went out of the chapel. The girl had vanished, and the man was already on the back of his horse. When he saw me he leant over and held out his hand.

'Thanks,' he said, with his bright smile. 'I am sorry to have bored you with my little affair.'

'It was no trouble,' I responded, taking his hand with, I fear, a slightly condescending air. 'I wish you luck, corporal.'

A slight look of surprise came over his face, and then he laughed.

'I suppose I shall never see you again,' he said lightly, 'or I should be glad to fulfil a similar office for you.'

He nodded to me in his familiar way, and, putting spurs to his horse, was a crawling fly on the Lapsburg road almost before I could get my knapsack into place.

I had walked about five miles toward the capital when the closed carriage overtook me. The blinds were down, so I caught no glimpse of the newly-made bride.

The stars had commenced to shine before I reached Lapsburg. I found my way without difficulty to my uncle's residence, who received me with his usual kindness.

'This is an unexpected pleasure, nephew,' he said, shaking my hand with unaffected cordiality; 'but it is always the unexpected that happens in Herzoglia.'

'You have no sinecure, then?' I asked when our greetings were at an end and I had satisfied him as to the welfare of relations at home.

'Alas! yes,' he said, sighing. 'None of the fun comes my way. I live an untroubled life. My government rarely bother me with instructions, and I know for a fact that they don't read my despatches.'

'That is surely satisfactory?' I hazarded.

He pursed his lips. 'Not to an ambitious man. What chance have I to bring myself into favourable notice? Here I am, and here I suppose I shall remain until I retire from the service.'

After dinner I began again on the subject.

'Is nothing stirring in this sleepy little place?' I asked.

He yawned a little. 'I shouldn't be surprised if there was a revolution in a day or two.'

'Not really?' I cried.

'It is quite possible,' he answered; 'but I don't take much interest in the matter.' He lit a cigar, and began upon a subject which seemed to interest him more. 'Diplomacy in Herzoglia,' he said, 'resolves itself into a prolonged duel between the Austrian and the Russian ambassadors. I look on and speculate how much better I could do things myself.'

'What is the bone of contention?'

'It is the old fight for "influence." It happens that there are two claimants to the throne. There is Queen Elma, the reigning sovereign; and then there is her cousin, the Count Ulric of Lapsburg, who, I think, has the better claim, and whose following is undoubtedly increasing. Elma, however, has the support of Russia.'

'Well?' I asked, for he had paused.

'The whole capital is divided into two rival parties. I say the capital advisedly, for the country people don't care two straws about the matter. The court is enclosed in a network of intrigue. There is certain to be a big flare-up soon.'

'But what have the ambassadors to do with it?'

'If Count Ulric were to upset the present dynasty it would mean the end of Russian influence.'

'I see.'

My uncle roused himself. 'It is quite plain to me,' he said, with increased vivacity, 'that if once Ulric was suppressed, Queen Elma would shortly follow him into limbo. She is not a tractable person, and insists on her own way, notwithstanding Russian protests. Oh, she's a difficult person, is the Queen Elma.'

'Why don't the two—Elma and Ulric—combine against their common foe?' I asked wisely.

'Things are not so plain to the persons concerned as they are to so acute an observer as myself,' said my uncle gravely. 'But your remark outlines the policy of the Austrian ambassador.'

'Whose star is in the ascendant just now?' I asked, yawning a little, for I was tired after my walk.

'The Austrian ambassador's, if rumour speaks true. His object is to get the Queen and Ulric to marry; and I understand that at the court ball to-morrow their formal betrothal will be announced. Austria's calculation is that this marriage would be a check on Russian influence; but whether this would be so or not I can't say.'

'At any rate, the betrothal is a slap in the face for the Russian ambassador?'

'It would seem so; but one never knows what cards friend Slavoski has up his sleeve. I await developments.'

'What do the parties chiefly concerned think about their proposed marriage?'

'The Queen is in its favour. Ulric is a handsome young fellow,' replied my uncle absently. 'I like Ulric,' he went on. 'I like his breezy irresponsibility, and I wish him a better fate than to marry her Majesty.'

'Why? Is she ugly?'

'No; she is very handsome. But for a wife'—He made an expressive gesture.

'Tell me,' I said, interested.

My uncle smiled. 'I will make a point of presenting you at the ball to-morrow. You will be able to judge for yourself.'

'What is her defect?' I persisted.

'She reminds me in some respect of your poor dear aunt,' he replied, casting a glance up at the painting of his deceased wife that hung upon the wall.

I discreetly did not press for further particulars.

'What does Count Ulric think of it all?' I asked, after a moment's reflection.

'Heaven knows! He is a fluttering, irrespon-

sible butterfly, and neither knows nor cares what the next half-hour will give forth. And yet he is a charming young fellow.'

'A curious pair to control the destinies of a kingdom,' I observed.

My uncle nodded. 'They come straight from comic opera; and yet,' he added thoughtfully, 'one never knows whether the orchestra may not strike up a tragic finale.'

'The Queen loves Ulric?' I asked.

'And is as—jealous—as—as'—His eye sought the picture on the wall.

'How will it all end?'

'I haven't an idea. I am inclined to think, as I said, that friend Slavoski is laying the train for a *coup d'état*.'

'He seems a regular Machiavelli.'

My uncle looked absently at the electric lights. 'He is able enough, no doubt. I sometimes wish I had an opportunity of crossing swords with him. But, alas! there's no chance of it.' He caught my eye, and smiled. 'It's a secret between us, that though I go about in a mask of impenetrable mystery, I have really nothing to hide.'

'I should like to meet Slavoski.'

'And so you shall, my boy. He is dining here to-morrow before the ball. But you must be tired, and I have been wearying you. Good-night.'

CYCLE TOURING.

TAKEN altogether,' says the Countess of Malmesbury, 'cycling has been one of the greatest blessings given to modern women.' One of the very apparent benefits to both men and women is the ability to quickly change surroundings, deliver from monotony, and give a wider horizon to daily existence. Not every one can take a cycle tour round the world, yet all who ride may make a bit of this fair world better known to themselves, develop a love for country life, and counteract the dwarfing influence of the overcrowded life in town. When in an inspired moment we review the past, that portion of time is probably fullest of pleasant recollection, of wholesome and healthy stimulus, which has been filled with memories of days in the open air; it forms a bridge between monotonous periods of hard work, as we think of days that have delivered us from ourselves, and given life a background of freshness and greenness; days which have been a well of refreshment, the remembrance of which is for a lifetime.

Puck said he would put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes. This occupies the average cyclist three years. Mr Thomas Stevens, starting from San Francisco in April 1884, took that time to ride round the world. Mr T. Allen and Mr

L. Sachtleben, two American students, as a practical finish to a theoretical education, also took three years to the 15,404 miles—not reckoning the unrideable oceans. Many people, and even we in our own fifteen years a-wheel, must have gone two or three times round the world in point of distance. Now that the cyclometer is in common use, this can be easily tested. We hear from time to time of plenty short and adventurous rides as the cyclist goes to and fro in his native land, native county, or afield on the Continent. In holiday seasons he breaks away from all restraint, and adds several counties to his conquests. Mr R. L. Jefferson has ridden from London to Constantinople, and also to Moscow, doing the 4281 miles of the latter journey in forty days. The *Times*, in noticing this exploit, asked if the game was worth the candle, as the cycle was made for man and not man for the cycle. Probably one might as well have himself whirled in the train like a parcel through grand and beautiful scenery. Later, Mr Jefferson annexed Siberia, and, like Captain Burnaby, he has since ridden to Khiva. Mr J. Foster Fraser, Mr Lunn, and Mr Low started in April 1896 on a cycling tour round the world; and the description by the former of 'The Finest Cycling Route in the World,' in *Chambers's Journal* for June, is sufficient to fill the soul of the average cyclist with envy.

When gone about intelligently, cycle touring has a high recreative and instructive value. A man may move from point to point, and be the slave of his machine, and when he returns the only remarkable thing in the journey has been the distance he has travelled in a given time; but this is scarcely touring for pleasure and profit. One may also ride a hundred miles a day; but if on tour it is probably better to ride from forty to fifty miles. Sandow asks his pupils to use their intelligence while at his gymnasium. Every cyclist should do the same when on the wheel. Here more than in any other method of travelling he finds that freedom of movement and gipsy-like absence of restraint which R. L. Stevenson describes so well in his paper on walking tours, which Thoreau enjoyed by Walden Pond, and Bayard Taylor in his walking tour over Europe, as recorded in his *Views Afoot*.

Experience is the best teacher in cycle touring as in aught else, and this one must pay for either in hard cash or in mileage covered. There is abundance of useful and helpful literature, however. The member of the Cyclist Touring Club is kept in touch with the freshest intelligence by the monthly magazine. There are plenty of other journals also, and many newspapers and periodicals find it to their interest to give considerable space to the subject. Books are useful in their own place, and we have the Badminton volume crammed with cycling lore; Pinkerton's *Complete Cyclist*; the four volumes of the C.T.C. handbooks devoted to England, Wales, and Scotland; Meeredy and Wilson's *Art and Pastime of Cycling*; Bidlake's *Cycling*, Brown's *Cycling*, Erskine's *Lady Cycling*, Hillier's *All-Round Cycling*, and *Cycling in the Suffolk Sporting Series*; and for pocket use there are maps and Inglis's *Contour Road Books*. A recent addition is *Cycle Touring* (Bell & Sons), by A. W. Rumney, tourist editor of *Cycling*, to which we will return. How the pastime is growing is evident from a glance at any of our good suburban roads on a fine day. The membership of the C.T.C. is almost 50,000, the French Touring Club now numbers over 60,000, while the League of American Wheelmen reckons over 100,000.

These numbers bear only a small proportion to the now cycling millions. Members of the C.T.C. are not all tourists, and hundreds tour who are not members. Mr Joseph Pennell, who has had extraordinary experience of touring, both here and on the Continent, says that it is a matter of temperament, and that those who tour must ever remain in the minority. In regard to progress he says: 'Stop when you get tired; travel by rail when it is too hard work. There is no glory to be got from hard work in cycling. You might as well amuse yourself.'

The cycle has widened the possible area of observation at our intended holiday resort. The county in which we reside can be gradually intersected, by

circular tours if possible; and much instruction and enjoyment may be secured both before and afterwards by getting up the historical, literary, and other associations of each day's ride. It is wonderful how interesting a dull local guide or book becomes when made an adjunct of such tours. More preparation is required if we strike off for several days or weeks; and it is then that the C.T.C. handbooks and the volumes already mentioned are most useful. May and June and early October often afford perfect weather for touring, as in the two early months the country is at its freshest, and frequently, in our uncertain climate, the end of July and August are failures in regard to weather. We are inclined to agree with Mr Rumney as to solitary touring: that 'in really wild scenery a man will see more of Nature's beauties, drink them in more keenly, acclimatise himself more readily to his surroundings, and in consequence probably get greater benefit from his holiday, than in company with another. . . . A solitary wayfarer will obtain more information and more interesting converse with the natives by the roadside, or the chance fellow-guests at an hotel, than a party or even a couple could.' To be either alone, or in company, say with two, three, or four brethren of the wheel, may be desirable, according as it suits our programme; for it is when we are done-up or in cases of accident that we know the value of company. We have done the whole of Tweedside, from the source of that river to the sea, with Ettrick, Yarrow, and the Land of Scott, alone, and also with companionship; also, the Carlyle and Burns localities in Dumfriesshire, including lonely Craigenputtock, and some of the country in Gallo-way glorified in the stories of S. R. Crockett. The Roman Wall in Cumberland, and Northumberland, we did alone, and, with Dr Bruce's admirable handbook, we found it singularly enjoyable. Northumberland is unusually rich in old castles, churches, and historical associations; and we have found visits to Bamborough, Holy Island, Alnwick, Morpeth, and elsewhere also memorable and interesting. We have been over many of the rideable roads in Perthshire, Banff, Moray, Aberdeen, and Kincardineshire; but found one of the finest rides a circular tour from the town of Perth. Starting from that town up the valley of the Earn, we had six miles of lovely Loch Earn and fifteen of Loch Tay on our route, which was by Methven, Crieff, Comrie, St Fillans, Lochearnhead, and Killin. This was a ride of about fifty miles on the Saturday; and, with Sunday's rest in Killin, we were fresh for other fifty miles round the north side of Loch Tay, by Lawers, Kenmore, Aberfeldy, Dunkeld, Bankfoot, back to Perth. The scenery between Comrie and St Fillans is uncommonly fine, and is grandly broken by the Abernethy Hills; and the westering sun striking on Loch Earn as we emerged at St Fillans, and on banks begemmed with primroses, made this part of the ride fresh and charming.

The experienced tourist may safely be left to arrange his own touring outfit. One may cram all the available guide-book information, yet find that it hardly fits his special case. To have a good machine, and to be personally in good condition, with weather and roads favourable, are the first essentials. No two cyclists will agree as to the amount of luggage to be carried, a point which is best determined by one's own taste and the length of the tour. An ordinary waterproof cape is a necessary abomination, which those who have experienced a damping by condensed and imprisoned perspiration might wish abolished. The equipment of the most experienced cyclist Mr Rumney ever knew was a tooth-brush, pocket-comb, and a map. According to Pemberton, the absolutely necessary articles are two spare Jaeger shirts, a pair of extra thin stockings, a cape, the usual toilet requisites, with several pocket-handkerchiefs. For Continental tours he advises joining the C.T.C., for the sake of getting machines easily through the custom-house; and he further advises the taking of a few spare parts in case of accident. The main points in a touring cycle are a reliable 'first-grade;' also a good brake—for to ride without one, in view of the many lamentable accidents caused thereby, is pure folly—mud-guards and luggage-carrier, gear not exceeding 63 inches, and weight of machine not under 32 lb. Having been thrown twice by stones catching in his front mud-guard, Pemberton has nothing good to say of them. One has only to get covered with mud from head to heel, however, to think them a necessary evil.

Here is a specimen of what one cyclist carries as a light outfit for a tour not exceeding a week: a flannel night-shirt, two needles and cotton, pocket scissors, three handkerchiefs, three collars, shaving requisites, pocket-comb, tooth-brush, extra shoe-laces, waterproof cape—weight $2\frac{1}{2}$ lb.; carrier 1 lb.—total $3\frac{1}{2}$ lb. Mr Rumney advises, instead of the night-shirt, another flannel day-shirt, which could serve the double use. Another cyclist carries, instead of a night-shirt, a suit of pyjamas, made of fine navy-blue serge, which he finds comfortable to sleep in, and even decent for appearing in public should his riding-clothes require drying. Another seasoned traveller carries, if out for more than one night, flannel pyjamas, flannel shirt, flannel pants, thin knickers, tennis blazer, light shoes, one pair of stockings, handkerchiefs, tooth-brush, nail-brush, and sponge—the whole about 7 lb. A lady tourist finds the following ample for two or three nights away from home: a comb, tooth-brush, soap, tooth-soap, small end of loofa, pair of shoes, and curling-pins, together with a light-weight *robe de nuit*, a silk vest, a silk blouse, an extra pair of stockings, and a cycling mackintosh cape. The whole rolls into a hold-all 12 inches long and about 18 inches in circumference.

The triangular bag fitted into the frame of the machine (only it interferes with freedom in pedalling if stuffed too full), or on a carrier over the back-wheel, is preferred by some. Messrs Cook, in their conducted tours, recommend a poncho in case, strapped on the handle-bar, which for a week's tour should contain an extra pair of stockings, flannelette night-shirt, brush, comb, tooth-brush and powder, soap in tin, and light waterproof leggings.

It is recommended by many that the day's programme be something like the following: After a hearty breakfast, make a leisurely start, take a simple lunch of bread and milk, or fruit, an early cup of afternoon tea, and make late dinner or supper, after riding is done, the heavy meal of the day. A square meal about midday requires a lengthy halt, as no one feels quite comfortable for riding without a good rest. Most people feel in form for the fastest work of the day between 5 and 7 p.m. There are sundry suggestions in the C.T.C. Handbook not to tour on a strange machine, nor on a strange saddle. The Henson, Esmond, and Pattisson saddles are specially mentioned by Rumney. The most comfortable saddle we have ever seen was that on the dandy-horse in the armoury of Alnwick Castle. We have also the hints not to tour in new clothes or new shoes, and to look well to tyres, bearings, and chain before starting; also, not to ride before breakfast without slight refreshment. Hear the C.T.C. again: 'Nibble biscuits and fruit' ('raisins or chocolate,' says Rumney) 'on and off all day as you ride, making a continuous picnic of the journey, with occasional wayside drinks of either soda and milk, stone gingerbeer, or tea. Avoid square meals during the day, as riding after dinner is disagreeable. Avoid new bread, indigestible pastry, and wines, beer, or spirits until the ride is over.'

Cycling, according to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, is favourable to temperance. He has never met a drunken cyclist. We have, but he was in a ditch, with his head bleeding like a stuck pig. Do not smoke when on the machine. Breathe as far as possible through the nose, though this is difficult where the work of riding is hard.

It is quite possible the tourist will turn his back on most of these hints of all kinds contained in papers and books, and only remember his shortcomings when necessity arises for the use of them, and so take the fortunes of the way whatever these may be. He wants a good time, freedom, fresh air, exercise, new scenes and impressions, as a fillip to a more humdrum existence. And, with few exceptions, he will not be disappointed; for should the weather prove good, and there be no accident, he will return so thoroughly refreshed that he will want to repeat the experience in another direction at the earliest possible opportunity.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

By JOHN BUCHAN.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—THE HOUSE WITH THE CHIPPED GABLES.



THE next morn the weather had changed. When I looked forth through the latticed panes to the street, it was a bleak scene that met my eyes—near a foot of snow, flakes tossing and whirling everywhere, and the roofs and gables showing leaden dull in the gloom.

My first care was to inquire at Mistress Macmillan if she knew aught of my cousin's doings, for the town-house of the Eaglesham Burnets was not two streets distant. But she could give me no news; for, said she, since the old laird died, and these troublous times succeeded, it was little that the young master came near the place. So, without any delay, I and my servant went out into the wintry day, and found our way to the old, dark dwelling in the High Street.

The house had been built near a hundred years before, in the time of Ephraim Burnet, my cousin's grandfather. I mind it well to this day; and oft, as I think of the city, that dreary, ancient pile rises to fill my vision. The three burnet leaves, the escutcheon of our family, hung over the doorway. Every window was small and well barred with iron, nor was any sign of life to be seen behind the dreary panes. But the most notable things to the eye were the odd crowstep gables, which, I know not from what cause, were all chipped and defaced, and had a strange pined appearance against the darker roof. The house faced the street, and down one side ran a little lane. Behind were many lesser buildings around the courtyard, and the back opened into a wynd which ran westward to the city walls.

I went up the steps, and with my sword-hilt thundered on the door. The blows roused the echoes of the old place. Within, I heard the resonance of corridor and room, all hollow and empty. Below me was the snowy street, with now and then a single passer, and I felt an eerie awe of this strange house, as if one who should seek to force a vault of the dead.

Again I knocked, and this time it brought me an answer. I heard feet—slow, shuffling feet—coming from some distant room, and ascending the staircase to the hall. The place was so void that the slightest sound rang loud and clear, and I could mark the progress of the steps from their beginning. Somewhere they came to a halt, as if the person were considering whether or not to come to the door; but by-and-by they advanced, and with vast creaking a key was fitted into the lock and the great oak door was opened a little.

It was a little old woman who stood in the opening, with a face seamed and wrinkled, and

not a tooth in her head. She wore a mutch, which gave a most witch-like appearance, and her narrow, gray eyes, as they fastened on me and sought out my errand, did not reassure me.

'What d'ye want here the day, sir?' she says in a high, squeaking voice. 'It's cauld, cauld weather, and my bane are auld, and I canna stand here bidin' your pleesur.'

'Is your master within?' I said shortly. 'Take me to him, for I have business with him.'

'Maister, quotha!' she screamed. 'Wha d'ye speak o', young sir? If it's the auld laird ye mean, he's lang syne wi' his Makker, and the young yin has no' been here thae fower year. He was a tenty bit lad, was Maister Gilbert, but he gaed aff to the wars i' the abroad, and ne'er thinks o' returnin'. Wae's me for the pna, hapless chiel;' and she crooned on to herself in the garrulity of old age.

'Tell me the truth,' said I, 'and have done with your lies. It is well known that your master came here in the last two days with two men and a lady, and abode here for the night. Tell me instantly if he is still here or whither he has gone.'

She looked at me with a twinkle of shrewdness, and then shook her head once more. 'Na, na; I'm no' leein'. I'm ower near my accoont wi' the Lord to burden my soul wi' lees. When you tae are fa'in' i' the hinner end o' life ye'll no' think it worth your while to mak' up lesome stories. I tell ye the young maister hasna been here for years, though it's blithe I wad be to see him. If ye winna believe my word ye can e'en gang your ways.'

Now I was in something of a quandary. The woman looked to be speaking the truth, and it was possible that my cousin could have left the city on one side and pushed straight on to his house of Eaglesham, or even to the remoter western coast. Yet the way was a long one, and I saw not how he could have refrained from halting at Glasgow in the even. He had no cause to fear my following him there more than another place. That I would come post-haste to the westlands at the first word he must have well known, and so he could have no reason in covering his tracks from me. He was over well-known a figure in his own country-side to make secrecy possible; his aim must be to outrace me in speed, not to outwit me with cunning.

'Let me gang, young sir,' the old hag was groaning. 'I've the rheumaticks i' my bane, and I'm sair hadden doon wi' the chills, and I'll get my death if I stand here longer.'

'I will trust you, then,' said I; 'but since I am

a kinsman of your master's and have ridden far on a bootless errand, I will even come in and refresh myself ere I return.'

'Na, na,' she said, a new look—one of anxiety and cunning—coming into her face; 'ye maunna dae that. It was the last word my maister bade me ere he gaed awa. "Elsbeth," says he, "see ye let nane intil the hoose till I come back."'

'Tut, tut! I am his own cousin. I will enter if I please;' and calling my servant, I made to force an admittance.

Then suddenly, ere I knew, the great door was slammed in my face, and I could hear the sound of a key turning and a bar being dropped.

Here was a pretty to-do. Without doubt there was that in the house which the crone desired to keep from my notice. I sprang to the door and thundered on it like a madman, wrestling with the lock, and calling for the woman to open it. But all in vain, and after a few seconds' bootless endeavour I turned ruefully to my servant.

'Can aught be done?' I asked.

'I saw a dyke as we cam' here,' said Nicol, 'and ower the back o't was a yaird. There was likewise a gate i' the dyke. I'm thinkin' that'll be the back-door o' the hoose. If ye wore awfu' determined, laird, ye might win in there.'

I thought for a moment. 'You are right,' I cried. 'I know the place. But we will first go back and fetch the horses, for it is like there will be wild work before us ere night.'

But, lo and behold! when we went to the inn stable my horse was off. 'I thocht he needit a shae,' said the ostler, 'so I just sent him down to Jock Walkinshaw's i' the East Port. If ye'll bide a wee I'll send a laddie down to bring him up.'

Five, twenty, sixty minutes, and more we waited while that accursed child brought my horse. Then he came back a little after midday; three shoes had been needed, he said, and he had rin a' the way, and he wasna to blame. So I gave him a crown and a sound box on the ears, and then the two of us set off.

The place was high and difficult of access, being in a narrow lane where few passers ever went, and nigh to the city wall. I bade Nicol hold the horses; and, standing on the back of one, I could just come to within a few feet of the top. I did my utmost, by springing upward, to grasp the parapet, but all in vain; so, in a miserable state of disappointed hopes, I desisted and consulted with my servant. Together we tried the door, but it was of massive wood, clamped witi iron, and triply bolted. There was nothing for it but to send off to Mistress Macmillan and seek some contrivance. Had the day not been so wild and the lane so quiet we could scarce have gone unnoticed. As it was, one man passed, a hayker in a little cart seeking a near way, and with little time to stare at the two solitary horsemen waiting by the wall.

Nicol went off alone, while I kept guard—an aimless guard—by the gate. In a little he returned, carrying an old boathook with the cleek at the end somewhat unusually long. Then he proposed his method. I should stand on horseback as before, and hing the hook on the flat surface of the wall. When by dint of scraping I had fixed it firmly, I should climb it hand over hand, as a sailor mounts a rope, and with a few pulls I might hope to be at the summit.

I did as he bade, and with great labour fixed the hook in the hard stone. Then I pulled myself up, very slowly and carefully, with the shaft quivering in my hands. I was just gripping the stone when the wretched iron slipped and rattled down to the ground, cutting me sharply in the wrist. Luckily I did not go with it, for in the moment of falling I had grasped the top, and hung there with aching hands, and the blood from the cut trickling down my arm. Then with a mighty effort I swung myself up and stood safe on the top.

Below me was a sloping roof of wood, which ended in a sheer wall of, maybe, twelve feet. Below that in turn was the great yard, flagged with stone, but now hidden under a cloak of snow. Around it were stables, empty of horses, windy, cold, and dismal. I cannot tell how the whole place depressed me. I felt as though I were descending into some pit of the dead.

Stanching the blood from my wrist—by good hap my left—as best I might with my kerchief, I slipped down the white roof and dropped into the court. It was a wide, empty place, and in the late afternoon looked gray and fearsome. The dead, black house behind, with its many windows all shuttered and lifeless, shadowed the place like a pall. At my back was the back-door of the house, like the other locked and iron-clamped. I seemed to myself to have done little good by my escapade in coming thither.

Wandering aimlessly, I entered the stable, scarce thinking what I was doing. Something about the place made me stop and look. I rubbed my eyes and wondered. There, sure enough, were signs of horses having been recently here. Fresh hay and a few oats were in the mangers, and straw and droppings in the stalls clearly proclaimed that not long ago the place had been tenanted.

I rushed out into the yard, and ran hither and thither searching the ground. There were hoof-marks—fool that I was not to have marked them before!—leading clearly from the stable door to the gate in the High Street. I rushed to the iron doors and tugged at them. To my amazement, I found that they yielded, and I was staring into the darkening street.

So the birds had been there and flown in our brief absence. I cursed my ill-fortune with a bitter heart.

Suddenly I saw something dark lying amid the

snow. I picked it up, and laid it tenderly in my bosom. For it was a little knot of blue velvet ribbon, such as my lady wore.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—UP HILL AND DOWN DALE.



RUSHED up the street, leaving the gates swinging wide behind me, and down the lane to where Nicol waited.

In brief, panting words I told him my tale. He heard it without a movement, save to turn his horse's head up the street. I swung myself into the saddle, and with no more delay we made for our lodgings.

'There is but one thing that we may do,' said I. 'The night is an ill one, but if it is ill for us 'tis ill for them.' And at the words I groaned, for I thought of my poor Marjory in the storm and cold.

At Mistress Macmillan's I paid the lawing, and having eaten a hasty meal, we crammed some food into our saddle-bags, and bade the hostess good-bye. Then we turned straight for the West Port of the city.

It was as I had expected. The gates were just at the closing when the twain of us passed through and rode into the bleak night. The snow had ceased to fall early in the day, but now it came on again in little intermittent driftings, while a keen wind whistled from the hills to the north. The land was more or less strange to me, and even my servant, who had a passing acquaintance with many country-sides, professed himself ignorant. It was the way to the wild Highlands, the country of Campbells and Lennoxes, and far distant from kindly Christian folk. I could not think why my cousin had chosen this path, save for the reason of its difficulty and obscurity. I was still in doubt of his purpose, whether he was bound for his own house of Eaglesham or for the more distant Clyde coast. He had clearly gone by this gate from the city, for this much we had learned from the man at the Port. Now, if he sought Eaglesham he must needs cross the river, which would give us some time to gain on his track. But if he still held to the north, then there was nought for it but to follow him hot-foot, and come up with him by God's grace and our horses' speed.

I have been abroad on many dark nights, but never have I seen one so black as this. The path to the west ran straight from our feet to the rugged hills which dip down to the river-edge some ten miles off. But of it we could make nothing; nor was there anything to tell us of its presence save that our horses stumbled when we strayed from it to the moory land on either side. All about us were the wilds, for the town of Glasgow stood on the last bounds of settled country, near to the fierce mountains and black morasses of the Highlandmen. The wind crooned and blew in gusts over the white waste, driving little flakes of snow about us, and cutting us to the bone with its

bitter cold. Somewhere in the unknown distances we heard strange sounds, the awesome rumble of water or the cry of forlorn birds. All was as black as death, and, in the thick darkness, what might otherwise have seemed simple and home-like was filled with vague terrors. I had shaped no path; all that I sought was to hasten somewhere nearer those we followed, and on this mad quest we stumbled blindly forward.

When we had gone some half-dozen miles a light shone out from the wayside, and we descried a house. It was a little, low dwelling, with many sheds at the rear—clearly a smithy or a humble farm. My servant leaped down and knocked. The door was opened; a warm stream of light lay across the snowy road. I had a glimpse within, and there was a cheerful kitchen with a fire of logs crackling. A man sat by the hearth shaping something or other with a knife, and around him two children were playing. The woman who came to us was buxom and comely, one who delighted in her children and her home. The whole place gave me a sharp feeling of envy and regret. Even these folk, poor peasants, had the joys of comfort and peace, while I, so long an outlaw and a wanderer, must still wander hopeless, seeking the lost, cumbered about with a thousand dangers.

'Did any riders pass by this road to-day?' I asked.

'Ay; four passed on horses about midday, or maybe a wee thing after it—twae stoot fellows and a brow-clad gentleman and a bonny young leddy. They didna stop, but gaed by at a great rate.'

'What was the lady like?' I asked breathlessly.

'Oh, a bit young thing, snod and genty-like. But I mind she looked gey dowie, and I think she had been greetin'. But wherefore d'ye speir, sir? And what are ye daein' oot hereaways on siccan a nicht? Ye best come in and bide till mornin'. We've an orra bed i' the house for the maister, and plenty o' guid saft straw i' the barn for the man.'

'Did they go straight on?' I cried; 'and whither does this way lead?'

'They went straight on,' said she, 'and the road is the road to the town o' Dumbarton.' And she would have told me more; but with a hasty word of thanks I cut her short, and once more we were off into the night.

From this place our way and the incidents thereof are scarce clear in my memory. For one thing, the many toils of the preceeding time began at last to tell upon me, and I grew sore and wearied; also a heavy drowsiness oppressed me, and even in that cold I could have slept on my horse's back. We were still on the path, and the rhythmical jog of the motion served to lull me, till, as befell every now and then, there came a rut or a tussock, and I was brought to my senses with a sharp shock. Nicol rode silently at my side, a great figure in the gloom, bent low, as was

always his custom, over his horse's neck. In one way my present state was more pleasing than the last, for the turmoil of cares in my heart was quieted for the moment by the bodily fatigue. I roused myself at times to think of my purpose and get me energy for my task; but the dull languor would not be exorcised, and I always fell back again into my sloth. Nevertheless we kept a fair pace, for we had given the rein to our animals, and they were fresh and well fed.

Suddenly, ere I knew, the way began to change from a level road into a steep hill-path. Even in the blackness I could see a great hillside rising steeply to right and to left. I pulled up my horse, for here there would be need of careful guidance, and was going on as before when Nicol halted me with his voice.

'Laird, laird,' he cried, 'I dinna ken muckle about the Dumbarton road, but there's yae thing I ken weel, and that is, that it keeps i' the laigh land near the water-side a' the way, and doesna straggle ower brae-faces.'

This roused me to myself. 'Did we pass any cross-road?' I asked; 'for God knows the night is dark enough for any man to wander. Are you sure of what you say?'

'As sure as I am that my fingers are cauld and my een fair dazed wi' sleep,' said he.

'Then there is nought for it but to go back and trust to overtaking the path. Our highway must lie to our left, since we clearly have turned to the right, seeing that if we had turned to the left we should have reached the water. If, then, we strike straight from here along the bottom of the slope, will we not reach the town? The chances are that we should never find our path, whereas this way will bring us there without fail if we can stomach some rough riding.'

'Weel, sir, I'm wi' ye wherever ye like to gang. And I'll no deny but that it's the maist reasonable road to tak', if ye're no' feared o' breakin' your craig ower a stane or walkin' intil a peat-bog.'

So, wheeling sharply to our left, we left the path and rode as best we could along the rough bottom of the hills. On one hand the land lay back to the haughlands and ordered fields; on the other it sloped steeply to the hills. Scrunts of birch-trees and strange, gnarled trunks came at times; but in general the ground was open and not unsuited for horses in the light of day. Now it was something more than difficult, for we came perilous near oftentimes to fulfilling my servant's prophecy. All drowsiness had vanished with the rough-and-ready mode of travel, and in this fashion we must have ridden some half-dozen miles, when we were suddenly brought to an end in our progress. Before us lay a little ravine clogged with snow, in whose bottom a burn roared. It was a water of little size, and in summer weather one might all but have leaped it. Now

the snow had swollen it to the semblance of a torrent, and it chafed and eddied in the little gorge, a streak of dark, angry water against the dim white banks. There was nothing for it but to enter and struggle across, and yet, as I looked at the ugly swirl, I hesitated. I turned to Nicol, who sat with his teeth shaking with the bitter weather.

'There is nought for it,' said I, 'but to risk it. There is no use in following it, for we shall find no better place in a ravine like this.'

Even as I spoke my servant had taken the plunge, and I saw horse and man slip off the snowy bank into the foam. I followed so closely that I lost all sight of them. To this day I remember the feelings of the moment—the choking as an icy wave surged over my mouth, the frantic pulling at the bridle-rein, the wild plunging of my horse, the roar of water and the splash of swimming. Then, with a mighty effort, my brave animal was struggling up the farther side, where my servant was already shaking the water from his clothes.

This incident, while it put me in better heart, vastly added to my bodily discomfort. An icy wind shivering through dripping garments may well chill the blood of the stoutest. And for certain the next part of the way is burned on my memory with a thousand recollections of utter weariness and misery. Even my hardy servant could scarce keep from groaning; and I, who was ever of a tenderer make, could have leaned my head on my horse's neck and sobbed with pure feebleness.

The country was now rough with tanglewood, for we were near the last spur of the hills ere they break down on the river. Somewhere through the gloom lights were shining and moving, as I guessed from a ship on the water. Beyond were still others, few in number, but fixed, as if from dwelling-houses. Here at last, I thought, is the town of Dumbarton which I am seeking; and, fired with the hope, we urged on the more our jaded beasts.

But lo! when we came to it, 'twas but a wayside inn in a little clachan, where one solitary lamp swung and cast a bar of light over the snowy street. I hammered at the door till I brought down the landlord shivering in his night-dress. It might be that my cousin had halted here, so I asked the man if he had any travellers within.

'None, save twae drunk Ayr skippers and a Glesca packman; unless your honour is comin' to keep them company.'

'Has any one passed, then?' I cried.

'How could I tell when I've been sleepin' i' my bed thae sax 'oors?' he coughed, and seeing we were no sojourners, slammed the door in our face.

We were numb and wretched, but there was nought for it but to ride on farther to the town. It could not be far, and there were signs of morn already in the air. The cold grew more intense,

and the thick pall of darkness lifted somewhat toward the east. The blurred woods and clogged fields at our side gradually came into view; and as, heart-sick and nigh-fordone with want of sleep, we rounded the great barrier ridge of hill, an array of twinkling lights sprang up in front and told us that we were not far from our journey's end. Nevertheless it was still dark when we rode into the narrow, cobbled street and stopped at the first hostelry.

Now both the one and the other were too far gone with weariness to do more than drop helplessly from our horses and stagger into the inn parlour. They gave us brandy, and then led us to a sleeping-room, where we lay down like logs and dropped into a profound slumber.

When we awoke the morning was well advanced.

I was roused by Nicol, who was ever the more wakeful, and without more delay we went down and recruited our exhausted strength with a meal. Then I summoned the landlord, and asked, more from habit than from any clear expectation, whether any travellers had lodged overnight.

The man answered shortly that there had been a gentleman and a maid, with two serving-men, who had but lately left.

In a great haste I seized on my hat and called loudly for the horses. 'Where did they go?' I said. 'By what way? Quick, tell me.'

'They took the road down to the ferry,' said he, in great amazement. 'It's no' an 'oor since they gaed.'

Thereupon I flung him his lawing, and we rushed from the house.

PREMATURE BURIAL.



READERS of Wilkie Collins's novel, *Jessie's Daughter*, will remember that dramatic scene in the German deadhouse, when the English widow, poisoned and supposed to be dead, wakes from her awful sleep and confounds her enemies. Indeed, this is an old device of the realistic novelist, and one which never fails to enthrall the reader by the very daring with which so grim a subject is made subservient to the demand for thrilling fiction. Yet, if all accounts are true, the novelist who relies upon this form of incident is likely in the future to find himself, like Othello, occupationless. It is all owing to those terrible X-rays, which have so much to answer for already, and which, like a piercing search-light, are dispelling the mist and darkness in which so many important facts have long been lost to sight. We are now informed, among other wonderful things possible since their discovery, that it is easy, by a slightly different form of ray, to photograph the interior of the human body, the resultant photographs differing according to whether the body is dead or living. This means, of course, supposing the invention to be worth anything, that the world will be placed in possession of what scientists have long been seeking—an absolute test whether death has really taken place. In Paris the rays have already been used to good purpose. The relatives of a man who was supposed to have died were afraid to inter him, lest the spark of life had not quite departed. In the end they satisfied themselves by having the thorax exposed to the wonderful Röntgen rays. The result dispelled all doubt and fear. The slightest and most occasional movement of the heart would have blurred the picture; there was no such movement—the heart was still and rigid—the man was dead beyond all question.

It is impossible almost, at first thought, to

realise the immensity of such a discovery, and its inestimable value to mankind. Think for a moment of the horrors of premature burial. Think of the terrible uncertainty with which many human beings are even to-day put away into the tomb; and think also of the horror and unspeakable anguish of the wretched creature whose return to consciousness is but the prelude to a death than which it is impossible to realise anything more ghastly or horrible. This Victor Hugo realises in a thrilling scene in *Les Misérables*. If this new invention can do what is claimed for it, these uncertainties and horrors will become things of the past, and the haunting fear which has pursued so many nervous people through life will vanish like the mists of night before the rising sun.

There are people who steadfastly refuse to believe in the possibility of a living interment. Yet in 1896 no less than 11,464 uncertified deaths took place in the United Kingdom, the bodies of these being placed in the ground without official examination to see if life had really left. The Home Secretary, questioned in 1897 in the House of Commons on the subject, remarked that the uncertified deaths were increasing year after year, but he did not think that a certificate of death would be a guarantee against premature burial. Possibly not, owing to our present faulty system. Hundreds of certificates are given every year by medical men who never see their patients in the hour of death, nor even after, so that a certificate in such cases is no guarantee at all. Nor is in all cases the certificate of a doctor who has seen the body thoroughly trustworthy, for examination has oftentimes revealed the appalling fact that the supposed corpse was not dead at all when interred, but lived to die a death so truly terrible that the pen shrinks from even attempting to describe it. Moreover, medical certificates are

not always made out as carefully as they might be. It was reported in the Manchester papers a short time back that at an inquest at Runcorn on an infant there were three mistakes in the doctor's certificate. It was stated in the certificate that the certifying doctor saw it alive later than he really did; that the age was given wrongly; and the address at which the child died was wrong. As the coroner remarked, the doctor acted in good enough faith, but 'without due inquiry.' Exactly; and many a hundred death-certificates are issued yearly 'without due inquiry.' That is one of the faultiest points in our present system.

What has long been wanted has been a scientific test of death. At present, leaving the discovery of the X-rays out of account, there is no such test. There is, indeed, the old-fashioned belief that if a pin is used to prick the skin the puncture will remain open in the case of a dead body, whereas the puncture will redden and close up if the person is still alive. Yet this, and kindred tests, have not always acted, and it is the knowledge of this fact which has led so many people to leave directions for a thorough examination to be made of their bodies after death was supposed to have taken place. Wilkie Collins, who has already been quoted, left a missive among his papers directing that when he died a thorough examination of his body was to be made by a skilled surgeon. Lady Burton, wife of Captain Sir Richard Burton, ordered that her body should be pierced with a needle in the region of the heart. Mr Edmund Yates of the *World*, Miss Ada Cavendish, Miss Harriet Martineau, the authoress, and Hans Andersen, the writer of so many fairy tales, may be mentioned as instances of men and women who have left instructions that they should not be interred until everything possible had been done to make sure that they were lifeless. In some cases it was the severance of a vein, in others even decapitation, that was resolved upon. Others, with a similar end in view, have adopted different means. The signalling invention of Edgar Allan Poe—who wrote this subject up in his characteristically weird fashion—is familiar to all readers. Then there is the apparatus of a Russian inventor, which consists in a mechanism placed in the throat of the corpse. If consciousness returned, and an effort were made to breathe, the effort set in motion certain wires, which resulted in a bell ringing in the cemetery-keeper's lodge. In *Jezabel's Daughter* the idea is very similar, save that, instead of a throat apparatus, wires were fastened to the hands of the corpse. Last year Sir Henry Littlejohn told his students at Edinburgh of a fancy coffin, fitted with patent springs so constructed that on the slightest indication of returning life they would immediately open the coffin and thus save the victim. This may have been a reference to the Russian invention, seeing that the idea is the same, though there is a slight difference in detail.

These things are mentioned to show that a reasonable fear of premature burial has existed in the minds of persons who could not be called 'cranks.' Nobody who knew the late Edmund Yates or Wilkie Collins would imagine for a moment that their minds were unevenly balanced, or that they were likely to be frightened by foolish fears. As a matter of fact, they knew that the fate they dreaded was possible, and that our present regulations were not ample enough to prevent it. The only test of death we have is the appearance of decomposition. On sanitary and other grounds this cannot always be waited for, and so human bodies are perforce put away without any real valid test having been made. They may be dead—the vast majority are; they may not be dead, and investigation and research have unfortunately proved that in quite a number of cases they certainly were not.

There is a large literature on this subject, which is interesting if gruesome reading. A recent pamphlet gives no less than thirty-two cases of actual premature burial, four probable or doubtful cases, and no less than sixty-nine averted cases, all on the authority of medical men who vouch for the accuracy of the facts. The Rev. H. R. Haweis, whose pen illuminates any subject it touches, has also written a booklet on the subject, in which he collected many actual cases of interment before death, on testimony which cannot be doubted. Then recently, since these publications, several cases have been reported from France, where interments are allowed after twenty-four hours' interval after death. In most Continental countries, and certainly always amongst the Jews, interment follows rapidly upon the heels of death, and it is a singular fact that the greater number of cases of premature burial are reported from those countries where this rapidity is customary. This is proof enough that these were instances of merely suspended animation—similar to that written of by Lady Burton in her *Life*—which might have been discovered by either of two things—a thorough test of the departure of life, or by waiting until animation was resumed. The thorough test we have not as yet seen in operation; the waiting, in most cases, is altogether out of the question.

It is an affectation in some quarters to pour ridicule upon fears of premature burial. It is quite true that the cases of such interment are rare in comparison with the number of deaths. Still they *do* happen, and *may* happen, and it is because of this that the discovery of a real test such as the one just announced is of such great importance to mankind. In Paris the civic authorities some years ago offered a prize for such a test, but it was never awarded. In England no similar step has ever been taken by the authorities, and yet no less a person than Sir Henry Thompson tells us that it is easier for a case of premature burial to take place in Eng-

land than in France under our present system of allowing so many uncertified deaths, and of granting certificates without the medical men having subjected the body to a careful examination. The fact is that the public were roused to a state of almost unreasoning fear some years ago by the discovery of a few cases, and then allowed themselves to be lulled into a sense of security by the emphatic declaration that the possibility was so remote as not to be worth thinking about. It was an instance of the swing of the pendulum so typical of the British mind; and in this connection it has to be admitted that the public were unreasonably excited. Too much was made of the solitary cases discovered, and the danger was painted in colours much too lurid. Everybody who could invent a story of a supposed return to life in the coffin was sure of a ready audience, and it is not to be wondered that some absurd exaggerations found their way into print. One such instance may be worth recalling. An

old woman, bent with age, lay in her coffin, with a penny on each eye to keep down the lid. During the 'wake' she suddenly sat bolt upright; the pennies dropped from her eyes, and she stared fixedly about her. The explanation was very simple. After being deposited in the coffin, a piece of wood was fastened across her body to keep her straight. The giving way of this brace, as it may be called, caused her poor old frame to spring like a bow to its customary position. Hence the sitting upright.

Doubtless many of the alleged cases of a return to life are to be explained by perfectly natural means. Yet with all this the fact remains that the fear of premature burial is a very real one, and is based upon a series of appalling facts which cannot be denied. It is because of this that in the invention of such a perfect test as that just discovered we are bound to recognise one of the greatest benefits which could be conferred upon humanity.

PATRICIA.

By C. KENNETT BURROW.

I COULD never make out why, in the name of wonder, you were christened Patricia.
'It was supposed to be feminine for Patrick, I think. But please don't waste your time in worrying over my name, Mr Shove.'

'And please always be careful, Miss O'Neill, to pronounce my name with the "o" long, and not as though it rhymed with "love." You said it very prettily then. My difficulty about your name is that one wouldn't know what to call you if one wanted to shorten it.'

'Pat,' said Miss O'Neill.

'But Pat's a man's name. Wouldn't Patry be better?'

'No,' she said; 'and anyway it doesn't matter, does it?'

'It might some day,' I said, and looked at her with what I intended to be a very meaning glance.

'Well,' said she, 'there'll be plenty of time for you to make up your mind.'

'That doesn't sound kind. I don't know what you mean by it, Pat.'

'Ricia,' she added.

'I may call you Patricia?'

'If it will please you.'

'Of course it will please me. But you?'

'I don't mind in the least.'

'You're a very indifferent person, Miss O'Neill.'

'Well,' she said, 'you can't expect me to be interested in my own name.'

'Or mine,' I added.

'I know you almost as well as my name.'

'And think as little of me, I firmly believe.'

'You're a silly boy. What do you want me to do? Am I to go down on my knees to you?'

'That would be very nice, I think. Better still; you might allow me to kneel.'

'That would certainly not be nice. Men always look foolish when they kneel to a woman.'

'How do you know?' I asked, for I was certain Patricia had never been to a theatre in her life, not even in Dublin.

'Do you suppose, Larry, that you're the only person who ever wanted to kneel to me?'

'I should like to suppose it, Patricia.'

'Would you indeed?' said she, and swept me a curtsy.

Then she sat down to the piano, and, turning her face towards me, sang:

'O Larry, me dear, ye're the nicest av boys;
But sure, Larry, that isn't all.
Ye must turn out yer toes in an iligant pose,
And never say die till ye fall!'

There were several verses in this foolish song, and she went through them all. When she had finished, Patricia bowed to me again and glided out of the room, smiling with unruined innocence.

'Patricia,' thought I, 'you're the most tantalising of creatures, and the sweetest. One moment you seem to love me, and the next you're as far away as the moon. What a pity we know each other so well! It doesn't give me a fair chance.'

It was November, but fine and clear and not at all cold. I walked into Ballyelagher after lunch

to post my letters and to buy some little things for Patricia. She made no scruple to use my services. I remember in one shop, where they sold everything, I found some fine Irish clay-pipes, and bought two dozen of them; these I carried back in great triumph, packed in a little box. Patricia begged one of them, to blow soap-bubbles she said; but I never saw her engaged in that charming occupation.

After this I took my gun, and, calling the two setters, Mars and Nimrod, and little Willie Donnell to beat for me, I went over the turnip-fields to the wood. I care nothing for the wholesale slaughter of a big shoot, but I love the chances of a casual excursion with the dogs. If you want to get away from yourself, there is nothing like it, in my judgment. When your finger is on the trigger, and the dogs, head down, are making a line just ahead of you, there is no room for anything else; an abstracted person could not even walk over a turnip-field without coming to grief.

Mars raised a small covey of partridges, and, by unusual good luck for me, I killed with both barrels. This put me in a good humour with myself, and on we went. I can't say that Willie Donnell was a good beater, and he had a silly way of shouting 'Mark' shrilly when an innocent thrush or blackbird rose; but he meant so well and appeared to enjoy the work so much that I had not the heart to send him back.

We had worked half up the wood, and I had a couple of brace of pheasants to my credit, when Mars ran back, wagging his tail violently. 'Set, hang you!' I shouted.

'Oh, Mr Shove,' said a voice, 'shame on you to swear at the poor doggie because he goes to meet a friend.' I turned, and there was Patricia, calmly walking along through the dead leaves.

'Well,' I said, 'a dog shouldn't run away from his duty even for you. I could forgive a man for it. What do you want out here, Patricia?'

'Oh, I just heard the firing, and thought I'd come to see whether you could shoot.'

'Of course I can shoot.'

'You all say that. My cousin Archie O'Neill said so, but the birds he brought home were a week dead, and came from Carmore.'

'Well, my birds are still warm,' I said; and I called Willie Donnell to show them to her. She looked at them and nodded.

'I can shoot, you know,' she said.

'Indeed?' said I. 'Perhaps you would like to show me how well you do it, now?'

'You don't believe me; but I can.'

'I'll believe anything you tell me, Patricia.'

'Ah, Larry,' she said, 'you're a good creature, and I wouldn't deceive you for the world. Give me the gun.'

I handed it to her, and she looked to see that the cartridges were all right. I confessed to myself that she handled the thing in a business-like way, and not as most girls do, as though they were afraid

it might go off unexpectedly. I sat down on the trunk of a tree and looked at Patricia.

'Sit down,' I said, 'and get your nerves under control and think what you'd like to shoot at.'

She stood before me with the gun on her shoulder, part of the barrel being hidden by her loose hair; I felt that my gun was happy.

'What do you think I'd shoot at but a bird?'

'Oh, come!' I said.

She turned scornfully on her heel and called the dogs. I followed, watching her sure step on that uneven ground with delight. Suddenly Mars stopped dead, head down, tail steady. 'Mark,' I whispered. In a moment a cock pheasant rose and rocketed up into the bare branches. Patricia sighted with the utmost coolness, fired, and the bird fell.

'Bravo!' said I. 'I should have missed that. Considering that my gun's far too long for you, it was magnificent.'

'You forget,' she said, 'that I'm a big girl.'

'How could I forget with you standing there before me? If I live to be as old as Biddy Magnire, I'll remember how you look at this moment, Patricia. Ah, child,' I added (I felt that I might call her child, being four years her senior), 'if you'd only believe how you're always before me, night and day.'

She blushed and turned her dark eyes aside; I think her breath caught. At that moment Willie Donnell shouted, and another bird was up. Patricia fired and missed.

'The other barrel,' I cried.

'Larry, it isn't loaded,' said she, looking at me with the prettiest penitence.

'You're a nice sportswoman,' said I.

'You should have loaded it for me.'

'Well, I admit that. But what made you miss? It was an easier shot than the other.'

'You were talking to me,' she said.

'Patricia, put down that stupid gun and sit here by me; it's as warm as spring. We've shot enough for to-day, and Willie Donnell can go back with the dogs.'

'I must be going in,' she said.

'Nonsense,' said I; 'sit down, child, and make me happy.'

'Oh, if that will make you happy'—and she sat down on a tree-trunk and looked across the fields to the mountains that rose green and gray beyond.

'You could make me happy for ever, Patricia, if you liked.'

'Indeed,' said she. Then she turned her face to me and laughed softly. 'You think I could,' she went on; 'but what can a girl do, even a big girl? 'Tis easy talking, Larry.'

'Give me your hands,' said I, 'and I'll tell you.'

She gave me her ungloved hands, and I held them for a time without speaking, looking into her wonderful, deep eyes. She met my gaze as steadily as a child.

'Patricia, you can love me,' I said at last.

'I do love you, Larry.'

I shook my head.

'That's not the way I mean; you must love me as I love you.'

'And how's that?' she asked.

'So much that the sight of you makes me sick with happiness; to hold your hands, like this, is heaven, and to kiss you would be a kind of abso-lution.'

'I don't think I love you like that. But you may kiss me, Larry, if you like. You used to kiss me when I was a little girl, and now I'm only a little girl grown up.'

'You must kiss me as well.'

'Yes,' she said.

So we kissed, and for a moment I had my arm about her. Then she was on her feet, crimson as some of the dead leaves under her.

'I didn't mean that kind of kiss!' she cried.

'I'm sorry,' said I. 'You should have told me the kind you meant. My dear, if you knew my heart you would forgive me.'

She stood looking on the ground, kicking a little hole in it with the toe of her shoe. She was not really angry—I could see that; but I could not be sure what her trembling lips meant or why her eyelashes were heavy with tears. I did not realise then what the first lover's kiss symbolises to such a girl as Patricia, a girl compounded of fire and pride and utter nobleness of blood.

After a time she gave me her right hand again and said quietly, 'I forgive you.'

I stooped and touched her fingers with my lips—not a lover's kiss, but one of simple reverence.

As we walked back to the house (I was her father's guest) we hardly spoke at all. But that evening, as the old man nodded in his chair after our usual game of chess, we drew together again.

'To-morrow,' I said, 'you're going to take me to Cashel, aren't you?'

'You must see Cashel,' she said.

'Of course, and if to-morrow's fine'—

'We'll drive there,' she said, 'and have lunch in the ruins.'

'Beautiful!' said I.

'But it may be too cold,'

'There are rugs,' I said.

'It may rain.'

'There are umbrellas and mackintoshes. Let it be Cashel to-morrow, whatever happens, Patricia.'

She promised; and when I went to bed I sat up for a long time and smoked one of my new clays, thinking blissfully of Cashel and the long drive there and back. It was two o'clock before I was asleep; my room was so full of smoke that I could hardly see across it.

The morning was fine, and at eleven o'clock the car was ready and we set out. The country through which we drove was beautiful; but all my

eyes were for Patricia; only now and then did I realise how fair a land it was. Holy Cross Abbey, by the water-side, a haunt of ancient peace if ever there was one, stuck in my memory; but I can recall little else until we reached Cashel. Patricia had been very silent, but occasionally she gave me her eyes in a way that made my heart thump; I could not be quite sure just what she meant.

As we walked up the steep approach to the gray ruins that crown the abrupt Rock of Cashel she became her old self again, and we raced each other to the top. It was a dead heat, although Patricia protested that she won; but when I asked her what prize she wanted, she only glanced at me again with that new look of hers. We wandered about the ruins and the graveyard until it was time for lunch, which we spread upon the grass-tufted floor of what had once been a room, now roofless, and with a sheer drop on one side to a kind of courtyard below. We made the place, which we seemed to have entirely to ourselves, echo with our laughter, and the old cathedral looked down upon us not unkindly, like a ripe old man smiling at youth.

Patricia had had the forethought to put a bottle of champagne in the basket; but, for the reason, as she said, that she did not care for wine, only one glass. But I soon overcame her scruples and handed her a bumper.

'Patricia,' I said, 'you must drink my health.'

'I will, Larry, with all my heart.'

'Do you mean that?'

'I do,' she said, and drank, with a very pretty inclination towards me. Then she filled again and handed the glass to me.

'Your health, Patricia,' said I, 'with all my love, and may you see what a jewel I am and secure me while you have the chance!' And I drank to the last drop and turned the glass upside down.

'You're a jewel indeed,' said she, 'and will make some girl happy.'

'It's you or no one, Patricia. I've found you, and I'll look no farther.'

'Oh Larry, why wouldn't some one else do for you as well?'

'Because you are you and there isn't any one else in the world.'

'That's a good reason,' she said.

'It's so good that I wonder you can hesitate!' cried I.

'Have some cold chicken, Larry.'

'Hang the chicken,' I said; but I took it all the same, and we got on to less dangerous ground, and became children just as we had been in the old days.

After lunch we wandered about again, spending the afternoon in that hand-in-hand familiarity which is so sweet, and yet, to one in my undefined position, so bitterly disquieting. But I was blindly happy, telling her absurd stories that I

might hear her laugh, and sad ones that I might see her eyes fill with pity; and she, on her part, told me a hundred little things about herself that seemed to make me free of her inner life.

At last, when it was nearly dusk, we stumbled upon King Cormac's Chapel. I have no idea who King Cormac was, but I know that his chapel was extraordinarily dark and damp and gloomy, and that we seemed suddenly shut away from all the light and sweetness of the world. However, we proceeded cautiously, and after a time reached an arched embrasure with a projecting stone base from which the pillars sprang. Here we sat down in a silence that made Patricia shiver.

'King Cormac's Chapel,' I said, 'is like a prison.'

'It makes me cold,' Patricia answered.

There was a high window opposite, through which I saw a patch of evening sky; there was just light enough for me to distinguish Patricia's face dimly.

'Well,' I said, 'this has been a great day for me, Patricia. I've had you all to myself for six hours. But what's that when I want to have you all my life?'

She drew closer to me and touched my hand.

'Larry dear, what does it feel like here'—and she laid her hand upon her heart—'when you love so much as that?'

At that moment I heard a sound like the closing of a door, but I took no heed of it.

'It feels,' I said, 'as if another life were in you. And,' I continued, 'I can't bear it any longer. My spirit's all in the dark, just as my body is in this black chapel. Let's go away and get into the world again, and perhaps it will teach me to forget.'

I took her arm and led her to the door, she saying nothing, but I heard her breathing. I put out my hand and pushed against the grated door: it was locked. I was not in the least afraid for myself; indeed, I think I inwardly blessed King Cormac, but I did not know how Patricia might take it.

'Wait a moment, Larry,' she said, as I fumbled with the lock.

'We must wait!' I said. 'We're prisoners; the thing's locked.'

'Locked!' she cried. Then she laughed and took my hand.

'You can take care of me,' she said; 'in a minute you may shout; but first I must tell you something.'

A pang struck through my heart.

'Well, child,' I said.

'I think I love you a little, Larry.'

'I believe that, but a little's no good. Don't play with me, Patricia.'

She drew herself up and took my face between her hands and kissed me. All the blood in my body seemed to run to meet that kiss.

'Will that do? Is that love enough?'

'Pat,' I cried, 'do you mean it? Is it true?'

'Would I lie to you, Larry?'

'God bless King Cormac,' I said, and took her in my arms.

'I knew it yesterday, Larry.'

'Then God bless yesterday as well.'

'Are you happy now, Larry?'

'Don't!' I said. 'This is no place for making love, Pat—'tis a king's chapel. Where's your reverence, child?'

'King Cormac's dead,' she said.

'Yes, but he might have a ghost.'

'I'd love to see it.'

'I'd rather see the care-taker,' I said, and with that shouted at the top of my voice. After five minutes of this exercise we heard a shuffling of feet and saw the swaying light of a lantern. A frightened face appeared at the other side of the grating.

'What's that at all?' asked a shaking voice.

'What indeed! What do you mean by locking folks in like this?'

'Ach, sure, I didn't know ye were there.'

'You might have looked, anyway.'

'Sure I did look, but devil a soul could I see.' He opened the door and let us forth, full of eloquent apologies.

'There's a car waitin' at the bottom av the hill; maybe that's yours, sor?'

'Maybe it is,' I said, and made him happy with half-a-crown.

As I have already said, I don't know who King Cormac was; I prefer that he should remain a myth to me; but I never look at Patricia without blessing his chapel and his name.

THE ROMAN WALL, NORTHUMBERLAND.

SUNSHINE and the old gray wall,
Far blue sky and rest;
Where the curlews, passing, call,
And the stonechats nest.

MIDDAY, where the foxgloves tall
Rear their purple heads:
Where the wanderer's slow footfall
Sinks in thymy beds.

IN the perfect summer air,
Dreaming here I lie;
Peewits, o'er the landscape bare,
Circling round me fly.

PURPLE flower from foreign land
On the ruined stone;
Brought by careless Roman hand,
Name and fame unknown.

Gleaming water far away,
Burnished in the sun:
Catching sunset's latest ray,
When the day is done.

IN the evening's calm repose,
Still I take my rest
As the rook far homeward goes,
Sailing to the west!

G.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE CHOICE MATRIMONIAL.

By the Author of *How to be Happy though Married*; *The Five Talents of Woman*, &c.

THERE are men who take less thought and care in the choice of a wife than they do in selecting a tie or a pair of gloves; and there are girls who marry men about whom they know as little as they do about the running of a torpedo or the management of a first-class battleship. No wonder that husband and wife give and receive shocks after marriage. If ever we should obey a precept in reference to marriage, surely it ought to be that of Goethe—'Choose well; your choice is brief, but yet endless!'

'But love is blind,' people say, 'and marriage is a lottery.' Certainly love may not be very sharp-sighted; but we need not blindfold it. The hero of Carlyle's book, *Sartor Resartus*, says that in the blackest period of his doubt he was withheld from suicide by a certain afterglow of Christianity. In the same way, even when our judgment is most blinded by love, a certain afterglow of common-sense may save us from killing our happiness by a foolish marriage. We may be head over ears in love; but we will not entirely lose our heads if we have tried to cultivate presence of mind in the time of danger.

Of course it is by our feelings and instincts, and not by our reason, that we make choice in this matter; but reason may exercise at least a negative influence. If our hearts tell us when we should marry, our heads may point out those with whom it is inexpedient to wed; and it is possible to keep our hearts in our heads.

In saying this I am far from advocating the cold-blooded marriage of expediency. No; I believe in love-marriages, and think that they are far more likely to turn out well than are those which are formed upon so-called interested principles.

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?

In this sweet little song of Shakespeare the word 'fancy' means love; and the true answer, as it

No. 32.—VOL. I.

seems to me, to the question is that this love or fancy is bred or produced, not in the head, where we think and speculate and make bargains, but in the heart, where we feel, admire, and love. This, at least, is what Nature says. The first time a young man meets a certain young lady he feels drawn towards her as by an invincible impulse. He does not know what is over him. It might be the measles, but it is not—it is love. He says to himself, 'Well, of course I'm not a marrying man; but if I were I might do worse than marry that young lady.' And when he does marry her—never trust those who say that they are not marrying men: they go off first—his friends say, 'Well, I never could see what Mr So-and-so saw to like in Miss So-and-so.' That is just it: his friends could not see it, and he himself could not see it; but it was Nature speaking to him in his strongest feelings, and saying, 'Marry her, for she is your complement, the one who fills up and completes your nature. Do this, and you will be happy ever after; refuse her for the sake of another with more money or influential connections, and you will be as miserable as is your own dirty little soul.' It is true, as Mr Ruskin reminds us, that many mistakes come from marrying the wrong person; but though instinct is not infallible, it is, especially when it has not been spoiled, the best guide we have. One countryman said to another, 'Now, if every one had been of my thinking, every one would have wanted to marry my old woman;' his friend reassured him by saying: 'If every one had been of my mind, no one would have wanted to marry your old woman.' So it is that each eye forms its own idea of beauty, which is an excellent thing for some of us who otherwise might never have been able to marry at all.

The same sort of people who tell the young that in marrying they should not think of their feelings generally go on to say, 'And whatever you do, do not allow yourself to be influenced by beauty, for beauty is only skin-deep.' I never hear this about beauty being skin-deep without

[All Rights Reserved.]

JULY 9, 1898.

thinking of a reply which was once made by an Irish girl. She was very good-looking, and was talking to a young man who was anything but this. He, thinking that she wanted a little taking down, remarked in the course of conversation, 'But you know beauty is but skin-deep.' 'Yes,' she replied, 'I know it; but ugliness goes into the bone.' This saying, then, is neither true nor wise, but merely skin-deep; for what is beauty in many cases but the outward and visible sign of health? And we all know how important health is to matrimonial felicity. A rounded figure, bright laughing eyes, a clear complexion—these things, even if they were not, as we hold they are, good in themselves, are valuable as showing that their possessor is one who is capable of furthering the interests of the race by producing healthy children.

Then we are to remember that beauty of the highest kind is, as it were, a garment which covers spiritual and moral beauty, the beauty of holiness, the beauty of a good character; and this leads us to speak of character as being, after all, the great constituent of domestic happiness. An Irish magistrate once asked a prisoner before him, 'Are you married or single?' 'Single, please your worship.' 'Oh then,' replied the magistrate, 'it is a fine thing for your wife.' It is indeed a fine thing for any woman who has missed marrying a man with a bad or even an indifferent character. There are, I know, women who say that they do not mind men being a little wild; that they rather like a rake—just a small garden one, I suppose. Well, all that I can say is that these ladies are like their mother Eve, who 'knew not eating death.' I do not believe in marrying a man in a missionary spirit, hoping to turn him from the error of his ways. It is far more likely that he will improve his wife off the face of the earth by bad treatment than that she will reform him. Men after thirty years of age are not so easily reformed. Then you have to consider the effect living with a bad man will have upon your own life and character.

Maid choosing man, remember this:

You take his nature with his name.

Ask, too, what his religion is,

For you will soon be of the same.

'Who can find a virtuous woman?' Alter the question, and put it in this way: 'Who seeks for one?' Men marry those who please their eyes or who flatter them, and do not seek in their wives those qualities upon which domestic happiness depends; and then they wonder why their marriages are failures! A minister's wife falling asleep in church, her husband called out, 'Mrs B—, every one knows that when I married you I got no beauty with you; your friends know that I got no money; and if I have not obtained the grace of God with you, I have had indeed a bad bargain.' Truly, that man is much to be pitied whose wife is without the grace of

God; for as nothing can be better than a good woman, so nothing can be worse than a bad one. An old preacher, condemning those who make hasty marriages, says: 'If a man long for a bad wife, he were best to go to hell a-wooing, that he may have choice.' Some men and women marry so foolishly that one would think that they longed for bad partners. But, indeed, it is not necessary to go to the place beneath to satisfy such a longing. There are but too many upon earth capable of becoming bad husbands and wives, and it is as well to keep out of their way.

One of the most important things to think about in the choice of a partner for the matrimonial firm is temper. After impurity, drunkenness, gambling, and such gross sins, perhaps there is nothing which mars marriage more than bad temper. The confidential servant of a Scotch laird told him one day that he was going to leave his service. 'Why?' asked the master. 'Are you not comfortable?' 'Oh, comfortable enough; but, to tell the truth, I can't stand the temper of your wife. She's always scolding me.' 'If that be all,' said the laird, 'you have very little to complain of.' 'Little or much, I'm going.' Seeing that the man had made up his mind, the laird said, 'Well, go then, and be thankful for ever after that you have not to live with her.' It is indeed a matter for great thankfulness to escape marrying a person with a bad temper.

Sir David Baird and some other English officers were imprisoned by Tippoo Sahib in his dungeons at Bangalore. When the mother of Sir David heard the news in Scotland, alluding to the way in which prisoners were fastened to each other in those days, and to the energetic temperament of her son, she said, 'Lord pity the chiel that's tied to our Davie.' He or she is certainly greatly to be pitied who is cursed with one of the many varieties of bad temper.

'But how,' it may be asked, 'is the temper or any other characteristic of one with whom we are thinking of marrying to be known?' Men were deceivers ever, and even women can do a little in this way; and some of them do it so cleverly that after marriage their husbands discover that, like Jacob, they have courted one woman and married another. Why is a woman like a bell? Because you cannot tell what she is made of until you ring her. Replying to one who asked him whether a certain young lady would make a good wife, the famous preacher, Robert Hall, said, 'How can I possibly tell? I never lived with her.' This is, after all, the only true test; but still, a small straw shows which way the wind blows, and there are indications of character which a wise person choosing a life-partner would not fail to note. Inquire what kind are the mother and sisters of the one you are thinking about, and remember that character is shown by small things.

In his advice to young men, Cobbett tells them to

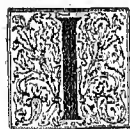
be very careful not to marry a lazy woman, for she will make her servants lazy and her children too. Then the question comes as to how the purblind lover is to discover whether she upon whose smiles he is doting is indolent or energetic. Cobbett answers this by giving certain indications to be noticed. 'Observe,' he says, 'how she shakes hands, how she puts her foot upon the ground, how she eats.' This last is very important; for if a girl eat in a lazy, indifferent manner, as if she took no interest in the operation, she is not likely to attend to her husband's dinner; and though some men have no hearts, I never heard of any without stomachs. Then Cobbett goes on to tell the story of how a young man of his acquaintance living at Philadelphia was put off from marrying by a chance expression which fell from the lips of his lady-love. He was visiting one evening at her father's house, and he heard her say to her sister, 'I wonder where our needle is.' That was enough; he went away as soon as was consistent with politeness, resolved to have nothing more to do

with one who had a needle in partnership with another, for he argued, 'She can't be an energetic woman, or else she would have a needle all to herself—her very own; and she can't be an orderly one who would keep my house as it should be kept, or else she would have known where the fractional part of the needle was.'

At the same time, it is quite useless for either man or woman to expect perfection. The man who will not marry until he gets this must necessarily remain unmarried. He is a sour grape, hanging by a twig of obstinacy on a wall of great expectations; and the only thing to be said in his favour is that he has missed the opportunity of making some woman miserable. A young man once said to a friend, 'I'm not going to give myself away when I marry. The fortunate girl who gets me must have three qualifications.' 'What are these?' 'She must be handsome, rich, and a fool.' 'Why all that?' 'Well, she must be handsome and rich, or else I won't have her. She must be a fool, or else she won't have me.'

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

CHAPTER XL.—EAGLESHAM.



T was dawning morn, gray and misty, with a thaw setting in on the surface of the snow. Down the narrow, crooked streets, with a wind shivering in our teeth, we went at a break-neck gallop. Sometimes in a steep place we slipped for yards; often I was within an ace of death; and at one street turning Nicol came down with a mighty clatter, though the next minute he was up again. A few sleepy citizens rubbed their eyes and stared from their windows, and in the lighted doorway of a tavern a sailor looked at us wonderingly.

In less time than it takes to tell we were at the water-edge. Here there is a rough quay, with something of a harbour behind it, where lie the sugar-boats from the Indies when the flood-tide is too low to suffer them to go up-stream to the city. Here also the ferry crosses the river four times daily.

Before us the water lay in leaden gloom, with that strange dead colour which comes from the falling of much snow. Heavy waves were beginning to roll over the jetty, and a mist was drooping lower and ever lower. Two men stood by an old anchor, coiling some rope. We pulled up our horses, and I asked impatiently where the ferry might be.

'Gone ten meenutes syne,' said one, with no change on his stolid face. 'There she is, gin ye ha'e een i' your heid to see,' and he pointed out to the waste of waters.

I looked, and saw a sail rising and sinking in the trough of the waves.

'When does she return?' I cried out, with many curses on our laggard journey.

'Whiles in an'oor, whiles in twae. She'll be twae the day ere she's back, for the ferryman, Jock Gellatly, is as fu' as the Baltie wi' some drink that a young gentleman gied him.'

So we turned back to the harbour tavern with all the regrets of unsuccess.

The man had said two hours, but it was nearer three ere that wretched shell returned; and when it came 'twas with a drunken man who could scarce stagger ashore. I was in no mood for trifling.

'Here, you drunken swine,' I cried, 'will you take us across and be quick about it?'

'I maun ha'e anither gless o' Duncan's whusky,' said the fellow, with a leer.

'By God, and you will not!' I cried. 'Get aboard and make no more delay, or, by the Lord, I'll throw you into the stream!'

The man hiccaped, and whined, 'I canna, I canna, my bonny lad. I had ower muckle guid yill afore I sterted, and I maun ha'e some whusky to keep it doon. I'm an auld man, and the cauld air frae the water is bad for the inside. Let me be, let me be;' and he lay down on the quay with the utter helplessness of a sot.

'Here is a devil of a mess,' I cried to Nicol. 'What is to be done?'

'I'll ha'e to tak' the boat mysel', laird,' said my servant quietly. 'If I droon ye, dinna complain.'

Indeed, I was in no mood for complaining of anything which would carry me farther on my quest. With some difficulty we got the horses aboard and penned them in the stalls. Then

Nicol hoisted the sail, and we shoved off, while with a boat-hook I kept those at bay who sought to stop us. Once out on the stormy waters I was beset with a thousand fears. I have ever feared the sea; and now, as we leaped and dived among the billows, and as the wind scoured us like a threshing-floor, and, above all, as the crazy boat now almost lay sideways on the water, I felt a dreadful sinking of my courage, and looked for nothing better than immediate death. It was clear that Nicol, who knew something of seamanship, as he knew of most things, had a hard task to keep us straight, and by his set face and white lips I guessed that he too was not without his fears. Nevertheless, the passage was narrow, and in less time than I had expected we saw a dim line of sand through the fog. Running in there, we beached the coble and brought the horses splashing to shore.

The place was dreary and waste, low-lying, with a few huts facing the river. Beyond, the land seemed still flat; though, as far as the mist suffered me to see, there seemed to be something of a rise to the right. My feet and hands were numbed with cold, and the wound in my wrist, which I got in scaling the wall, smarted till it brought the water to my eyes. I was so stiff I could scarce mount horse, and Nicol was in no better plight.

We rode to the nearest cottage, and asked whither the folk had gone who landed with the last ferry. The woman answered gruffly that she had seen none land, and cared not. At the next house I fared little better; but at the third I found a young fisher lad, who, for the sake of a silver piece, told me that they had headed over the moor about three hours ago.

'And what lies beyond the moor?' I asked.

'Beyond the muir,' said he, 'is a mnekle hill they ca' Mistilaw, a' thick wi' bogs; and ayont it there are mair hills and mosses; and syne if ye ride on ye'll come to Eaglesham, whaur the muirs end and the guid lands begin. I yince was ower there wi' my father aboot a cowl, and a braw bit place it is, and no' like hereaways.'

So Nicol and I, with dogged hearts and numbed bodies, rode into the black heath, where there was no road. The snow had lost all hardness, and was thick and clogging to our horses' feet. We made as good speed as we could, but that, after all, was little. About midday we had crossed the first part of our journey, and were clambering and slipping over the shoulder of Mistilaw. This hill is low and trivial contrasted with our great Tweed-side hills; but it well deserves its name, for it is one vast quagmire, where at all seasons mists and vapours hang. Beyond it and all through the afternoon we struggled among low hills and lochs. We halted at a solitary shepherd's hut among the wilds, and ate a vile meal of braxy and oat-cake. Then again we set forth, and in the darkening came to the wide moor which is the last guard of the wastes and borders the pleasant vale of Cart.

Now here I fell into a great fit of indecision.

It was clear that Gilbert and Marjory were but a little way off, in the house of Eaglesham, and I had almost reached the end of my travels. But here my plans came to a sudden end. Was I to ride forward and boldly demand my cousin to let her go? I knew my cousin's temper; he could make but one reply, and at last some end would be placed to our feud. But with this came another thought. Gilbert was not a man of one device, but of many. If I sought to wrest my lady from his hands by force it was most likely that he would be the winner, for he was ever ripe for high, bold, and dastardly policies, and at such a time was little likely to be punctilious.

So, in my extremity, I fell to consulting with Nicol, and between us we devised a plan. I liked it so well that I lost all dismal forebodings and proceeded to put it in action. Night fell just as we came to the meadows above the village, and the twinkling lights of the place served as our guides. There was an inn there which I remembered of old time, for the innkeeper had come originally from Tweeddale. At first I would have shunned the place, but then I remembered that the man was dead these half-dozen years, and all the place so changed that I was secure from recognition, even had I not been disguised and clad in the manner I was. So, without any fear, we rode up to the door and sought admittance.

The place was roomy and wide, with a clean-swept floor, a fire blazing on the hearth, and a goodly smell of cooked meat everywhere.

The landlord brought us a meal, which we ate like hungry men who had been a long day's journey in a snow-bound world. Then I lay back and stared at the firelight, and tried hard to fix my mind on the things which were coming to pass. I found it hard to determine whether I was asleep or awake, for the events of the past hours were still mere phantasmagoria in my memory. Through all the bewildering maze of weariness and despair and scrupulosity of motive, there was still the one clear thought branded on my mind. And now, as I sat there, the thought was alone, without any clear perspective of the actors or the drama to be played. I scarce thought of Marjory, and Gilbert was little in my mind, for the long series of cares which had been mine for so many days had gone far to blunt my vision and drive me to look no farther than the next moment or the next hour. I was dull, blank, deadened, with the one unalterable intention firm in my heart; but, God knows! little besides.

About nine or ten—I know not rightly—my servant roused me and bade me get ready. He had ordered the landlord to have the horses round to the door, giving I know not what excuse. I mounted without a thought, save that the air was raw and ugly. We rode down the silent street, out on to the heath, where the snow was deeper and our steps all but noiseless. The night was clear and deadly chill, piercing to the marrow.

A low snow-fog clothed the ground, and not a sound could we hear in that great wide world save our own breathing and our horses' tread. A sort of awe took me at the silence, and it was with solemn thoughts that I advanced.

In a while we left the heath, and dipping down into the valley of the stream, entered a wood of pines. Snow powdered us from the bare boughs, and a dead branch crackled underfoot. Then all of a sudden—black and cold and still, from the stream-side meadows and all girt with dark forest—rose the house. Through the tree-trunks it looked ghostly as a place of the dead. Then I remembered that this was the hill-front, where no habitable rooms were; so, marvelling no more at the dearth of light, we turned sharp to the left and came on the side looking to the river.

Two lights twinkled in the place, one in the basement and one in the low first story. I cast my memory back over old days. One was from the sitting-parlour where old Gilbert Burnet had chosen to spend his days; and the other—ah, I had it!—'twas from the sleeping-room of old Mistress Burnet, where she had dragged out her last years and drawn her last breath. But for these there were no other signs of life in the house.

We crossed the snowy slopes to the black shadow of the wall, where we halted and consulted. By this time some life and spirit had come back to my movements, and I held myself more resolutely. Now I gave my servant his orders: 'If so happen we get Mistress Marjory safe,' said I, 'you will ride off with her without delay, down the valley to the Clyde, and then straight towards Tweeddale. You will get fresh horses at Hamilton, and till then these will serve your purpose. Once in her own country-side, there remains nothing for you save to see that you do her bidding in everything. If God so will it, I will not be long in returning to you.'

Then, with no more words, we set our faces to our task.

The light in the window above us still shone out on the white ground. Many yards to our left another patch of brightness marked where the other lamp burned. There was need of caution and stillness, else the master of the place would hear. I kicked my shoes from my feet, though it was bitter cold, and set myself to scaling the wall. The distance was little, scarce twenty feet, and the masonry was rough-hewn and full of projecting stones, yet I found the matter as hard as I could manage; for my hands were numbed with the excessive chill, and the cut in my wrist still ached furiously. I was like to swoon twenty times ere I reached the corner of the window. With a sob of exhaustion, I drew myself up and stared at the curtained window.

Very gently I tapped on the pane, once, twice, three times. I heard a quick movement of sur-

prise within, then silence once more, as if the occupant of the room thought it only the snow drifting. Again I tapped, this time with a sharp knock which men use who wait long outside a gate in a windy night. Now there could be no doubt of the matter. A hand drew the curtains aside, and a timid little face peered out. Then of a sudden the whole folds were swept back and my lady stood before me.

She wore her riding-dress still, but a shawl of some white stuff was flung around her shoulders. There she stood before my sight, peering forth into the darkness with surprise, fright, love, joy chasing one another across her face, her eyes sad and tearful, her mouth drawn as with much sorrow, and her bright hair tossed loosely over her shoulders. It was many lone and dismal months since I had seen her—months filled with terrors and alarms and heart-sickening despair. And now, as she was almost within my reach at last after so many days, my heart gave a great bound, and with one leap the burden of the past shook itself from my shoulders.

'Open the window, dear,' I cried; and with trembling hands she undid the fastenings and swung the lattice open. The next moment I had her in my arms, and felt her heart beating close to mine, and the soft, warm touch of her neck. 'Darling,' I cried—'Marjory lass, how I have missed you, dearest! But now I have you, and shall never leave you more;' and I drew her closer to me, while she could only sob the more.

Then with a mighty effort I recalled myself to the immediate enterprise. The sound of the horses shuffling the snow without forced on me the need of action.

'My servant is without with horses,' I said. 'You must go with him, dear. It is our only safety. By to-morrow you will be in Tweeddale, and in a very little while I will come to you.'

'But do you not go just now?' she cried in anxiety, still clinging to me.

'No, Marjory dear,' said I, soothing her as best I could. 'I cannot come yet. There are some things which need my special care. If you think yourself, you will see that.'

'Is it aught to do with Gilbert Burnet? Oh! I dare not leave you with him. Come with me, John—oh, come! I dare not, I dare not!' And the poor child fell to wringing her hands.

'Marjory,' I said, 'if you love me, do as I bid you. I will come to no scath. I promise you I will be with you at Dawyck ere the week is out.'

So she put a brave face on the matter, though her lips still quivered. I went to the window and looked down to where Nicol stood waiting with the horses. Then I thought of a plan; and, finding none better, I cried to him to mount to the window-sill, for I knew his prowess as a climber, and the uncommon toughness of his arm. The horses were too jaded and spiritless to need any watching.

I caught up my lady in my arms and stepped out upon the ledge. Then very carefully and painfully I lowered myself, still clinging to the sill, till I found a foothold on a projecting stone. Below us were Nicol's arms, and into them I gave my burden. I heard him clambering down by degrees, and in a very little—for the height was not great—he had reached the ground. Then I followed him, slipping the last few feet and burying myself in a bank of snow.

I had brought a heap of warm furs from the room, and these I flung round my love's shoulders. My heart ached to think of her, weary from the day's hard riding, setting forth again into the cold of a November night.

'Oh John,' she said, 'no sooner met than parted! It is ever our fate.'

'It will be the last time, dear,' I said, and I kissed her face in her hood.

Then, with many injunctions to my servant, I bade them good-bye, and watched the figure which I loved best in all the world disappear into the darkness. With a sad and yet cheerful heart, I turned back and clambered again into the chamber.

There were Marjory's things scattered about, as of one who had come from a long journey. Something on a table caught my eye, and taking it up, I saw it was a slip of withered heather. Then I minded how I had given it her one summer long ago on the Hill of Scrape.

I again kicked off my boots, and in utter weariness of body and mind, I flung myself on the bed and was soon asleep.

THE MONEY-LENDING INQUIRY.

NO one can scan the columns of any newspaper without being invited, by puffing advertisements, to apply for a loan to some generous individual who seems anxious to bestow his money on the first-comer. Every week brings its batch of circulars, marked private, and addressed to us at our homes, soliciting us to borrow money from gentlemen whose system ensures the most absolute secrecy. Any one who has read the evidence given before the select committee of the House of Commons on 'Money-lending' can no longer doubt that professional money-lenders are thriving in all parts of the country. Mr Farrow, one of the principal witnesses, before the committee, wished to ascertain whether the demand for money was great. He advertised as a philanthropist in four London dailies, and agreed to offer money at 10 per cent. to respectable borrowers. On one day he received as many as two hundred and eighty-three replies.

The Inspector-General in Bankruptcy confirms our view as to the prevalence of professional money-lending. In a report which he presented to the committee, he stated that the number of 'receiving orders made during the two years (1895 and 1896) was 8500, and in these there were about 3160 claims by money-lenders which may fairly be described as of an usurious nature. The amount of these claims was approximately £445,000, or about 3½ per cent. of the total liabilities scheduled by the debtors, amounting to £12,400,000. The rates charged, as stated by the official receivers, and when reduced to percentages upon the amounts actually paid to borrowers, range from 10 to 3600 per cent.' Indeed, the fact that a select committee has been appointed to inquire into the alleged evils attending money-lending transactions is an eloquent testimony to

the range of this business. We do not purpose to forestall the report of the committee; but it is evident to any one that the two great questions which this body must answer are: (1) Is it for the benefit of the borrowing public that these transactions should be carried on? If not—(2) Can their objectionable features be repressed or modified? We appreciate the danger of drawing conclusions from isolated cases; but a perusal of the evidence convinces us that there cannot be the slightest doubt that roguery, deceit, and oppression are brought into requisition to the disadvantage of the unhappy borrower. Shylock is, and ever has been, more than a match for Bassanio.

As an instance of how respectable and temporarily embarrassed tradesmen are ruined by the money-lender, we may cite the case of a Leicester butcher. This man, in reply to a rosy and tempting advertisement, applied to a money-lender for the loan of £20. The money was required to purchase a load of hay for the butcher's stock. The money-lender, who for the purposes of gaining his clients' confidence was trading under the style of a bank, promised to go over and see the butcher and to grant him the loan, but required a preliminary fee of 10s. 6d., which was duly paid. The valuer came, and, in the absence of the butcher, went round the premises and noted in his memorandum book the particulars of the stock. The butcher having in the meantime arrived, the valuer promised to advance the money, but suggested that the butcher should take £30 and not £20. The butcher signed a document which was never read over or explained to him. The document was in fact a bill of sale, and was afterwards registered. The result was, as the butcher himself complained, 'his character was ruined, and nobody would let him have a carcass.' The whole thing was a 'plant.' £20 was the amount of the loan asked for; but, as the

money-lender knew that a bill of sale for this amount was not valid, he, by giving his client a false reason for making the suggestion, induced the borrower to take £30. The butcher was completely outwitted; he had wished to obtain the money secretly, but instead was publicly gazetted as a man who had a bill of sale on his goods. He imagined that the money was lent at 5 per cent. per annum, but afterwards discovered that 5 per cent. per month was the amount charged. The annual interest paid by this borrower on such a small sum as £30 amounted to £16, 12s. 4d., and this notwithstanding that good security was taken.

Another instance was related before the committee of the manner in which money-lenders by sharp practice induce foolish persons to borrow money at ruinous rates of interest. The witness was a solicitor. A client of his, who was temporarily in want of money, applied to a money-lender for £100. The latter immediately made inquiries, and found that the borrower, who was a lady, had an annuity of £600. Without any further interview, but with the purpose of securing a nice catch, he 'rushed' the proposed borrower by sending a letter to her enclosing a Bank of England note for £100 and a promissory note for her signature for £200 payable to him in three months. In the letter to the lady was a promise 'that if at the end of three months it would not be quite convenient for you to meet it (the promissory note), we can make other satisfactory arrangements; and if at any time when the note falls due you should be only prepared to pay a part of the capital, interest will only be charged on that part of the capital remaining, in proportion to the above terms, which I think is very fair and reasonable.' The lady was foolish enough to snatch at the bait. Once on the hook, she found escape impossible; the loan was renewed on the most inequitable terms; and although considerably more than the amount actually lent was repaid, she was driven into the bankruptcy court, and one of her largest creditors was the scheming money-lender who had entrapped and ruined her by charging her interest at the rate of 400 per cent. per annum.

Mr Farrow complains of another dodge which is a part of the stock-in-trade of these professional money-lenders. At the time of signing the promissory note the money-lender says: 'I am sorry I cannot make out my note for a longer period than three months; but that is my custom. But,' he says, 'the loan is for twelve months.' The borrower may then hesitate, and the money-lender replies: 'Oh, it is all right; there will be no difficulty about the renewal of it. You may rest assured that it will be all right, and that 15 per cent. is the rate of interest.' The borrower, who has been kept in hand until he really requires the money, signs the document, and at the end of three months the whole amount is demanded.

In cases of bills of sale the bailiff is instantly put in, and the belongings of the borrower sold at a sacrifice. Mr Farrow asserts that in many cases the borrowers, who are frequently clergymen and doctors, find that they cannot get away from their signatures without local exposure, which would ruin them, and they are bound to submit to go on renewing or to pay extortionate interest. This practice, which is frequently indulged in, enables the money-lender to obtain a rate of interest four times larger than the rate which the borrower imagines he has contracted to pay. The Inspector-General in Bankruptcy (whom we have quoted before) avers that 'the average ostensible rate of interest is from 60 to 70 per cent. per annum on the original advance;' but the actual rate paid would much exceed this rate if regard is had to the periodical reduction of principal by the weekly or monthly instalments. To explain: a person may borrow £80 repayable by ten monthly instalments of £10 each. The interest in such a case amounts to much more than 20 per cent., since the whole of the principal will not be outstanding for the ten months, but is being repaid by instalments.

These money-lenders also find it advisable and advantageous to conceal their identity under fictitious names. Indeed, the same individual has frequently a separate trade-name for each town or district in which he carries on business. As an instance of this practice: Some time ago a lady living in Llangollen borrowed £50, and agreed to pay £70 in ten monthly instalments. After paying four instalments she found herself unable to continue the payments, and applied to another money-lender in another district for a loan. She obtained £70, and signed a promissory note for £100, repayable in seven equal monthly instalments. Out of this advance she paid off the prior loan. The first money-lender received £20 as interest for the loan of £50 for four months. She paid three of the instalments in reduction of the second advance, but then made default, as she was unable to continue the payments, and so the second loan was called in. She then obtained another loan of £50 from a money-lender in a different district, and from this money she repaid the second loan. She eventually made default again, and, in the bankruptcy which followed, it was discovered that these loans had been obtained from one and the same person trading under different names. Here again it was discovered that, although the money-lender had been repaid a sum much in advance of the amount actually lent, he was a creditor for a sum in excess of that amount. This state of things was owing to fines being imposed for the slightest delay in the payment of interest. This money-lender trades under seven or eight *aliases*, and is by this means enabled to 'bleed' his clients to the disadvantage of the general body of creditors. It should be remarked that the money-lender is careful to

choose such names as give entire confidence in the localities in which they are used. When a money-lender trades under the style of a bank, he selects as the name of the bank a title as similar as is safe to one of the leading and well-known banking establishments trading in that locality. By this means he deceives a great number of ignorant persons, and so increases his connection by going before the public in a false garb. Another of this fraternity has established a connection with clerks in the Bank of England and other leading banks. This has been accomplished by sending the following letter to clerks immediately before going on their holidays: 'SIR, —As you will probably be taking your holidays before long, it may be convenient to you to anticipate your salary for a short time. I am prepared to advance you £10, £20, or more (according to your position or requirements), on your post-dated cheques, at the moderate interest of 2s. 6d. per month for each £5. I do not think you will meet with easier terms, and I may add that, having already a connection among gentlemen in the Bank of England, I am perfectly acquainted with the rules and regulations. Your transaction would be known only to myself, as I keep my own books and am not a professional money-lender.' This system unmistakably places the borrower completely in the hands of the money-lender, as instant dismissal is the result of it becoming known that clerks have any dealings with a money-lender.

The character of the professional money-lender is so shady, and the tricks to which he resorts are so many, that there has been a demand, both inside and outside the Houses of Parliament, to interfere by legislation for the benefit of the borrower and his creditors. It is not for us, however, to suggest remedies. The select committee will no doubt do that. It has been suggested that professional money-lenders should be licensed somewhat in the same way that publicans are; and, although there are many difficulties in the way, we cannot understand why this trade should not be regulated as is the trade in intoxicating liquors. Persons may urge that this would be an unjust interference with trade; but it must never be forgotten that, as at present carried on, this trade is a source of benefit to no one except the money-lender.

To speak the truth, the trade is a positive injury both to the borrowers and the general body of their creditors.

This is shown by the defence that money-lenders have pleaded before the select committee. Mr Samuel, a leading money-lender, and one of the most respectable members of the trade, said in his evidence 'that charging 60 per cent. leaves us (the money-lenders) 11 per cent. profit, and that is not unreasonable for the risk and labour attached.' No one can deny that the money-lender has great losses, owing to the fraud of

many of his clients; but the fact that the honest but financially embarrassed borrower must therefore pay interest at 60 per cent. renders the trade worse than useless. No one can afford to borrow money at such rate; and we can believe Judge Owen of the Cardiff County Court when he says 'that my experience is that when a decent man gets into the hands of a money-lender he never gets out of them.'

It is evident that by borrowing at such a rate as this the crisis can only be temporarily delayed, and that the crash is inevitable, and will, by reason of the delay, be all the greater. This system tempts a man to trade long after he has become insolvent. Every lawyer knows what that means. Many a man would have been able to save himself from commercial ruin had he, when he discovered that he was insolvent, called his creditors together and made an arrangement with them. But another and a worse course is pursued. It constantly happens that when a man is hopelessly insolvent he goes to a money-lender for the sake of enabling him to maintain his position for a few months or even weeks, and gives a bill of sale as security for a loan at usurious interest. Presently he makes default in payment of an instalment, and the whole, or at all events the greater part, of his estate is swept away to the exclusion of the rest of his creditors.

Money-lenders are also a scourge to the man who is short of ready cash to meet pressing liabilities, but whose condition has not arrived at an acute stage. Should men in such circumstances go to the money-lender they will never escape from his grip until they have become absolutely penniless.

Among other reforms proposed, Judge Owen advocates the fixing of a maximum rate of interest and the granting of powers to county court judges to set aside money-lending agreements on the ground that the money-lender has been guilty of fraud, or the borrower has been labouring under a mistake. They have not at present these powers; and if the agreement, bill of sale, or promissory note is in proper form and valid, they must give judgment for the money-lender, and must refuse to go behind any of these documents and hear evidence proving that the money-lender has tricked or defrauded the borrower. We are quite aware that there are circumstances in which a loan at a fair rate of interest, and from a respectable lender, may be of substantial assistance to a person temporarily embarrassed. Such a loan may, indeed, enable the borrower to permanently repair his position; but the one great lesson taught by the evidence before the committee is that, unless a man can borrow in such a manner, he had far better 'face the music' by calling his creditors together for the purpose of making an arrangement with them than resort to the professional money-lender who has under his control

a highly-perfected system of roguery daily practised for the undoing of unhappy borrowers. The wisest thing for a man embarrassed by pecuniary difficulties is to give no heed to money-lending advertisements, to cast them aside as false, and not to look in that direction for relief.

Since this was written, the *Times*, commenting on the work of the Money-lending Committee, believes that a judicial discretion will be suggested

as to what is a reasonable rate of interest, but that the Committee will scarcely recommend the total abolition of bills of sale; and mentions that it is not unlikely that a proposal will be formulated that the execution of bills of sale shall depend upon orders made by registrars of county courts after explanation of the whole circumstances, and that no seizure or sale shall be permitted without the consent of a county court judge.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER II.

THE next day I spent wandering through the quaint streets of Lapsburg, admiring the old-fashioned gables and queer jutting roofs that gave an air of mediævalism to the town. No less attractive were the pretty girls, in their picturesque dresses, who clacked past in wooden sabots.

At about noon I went into a little café standing off one of the smaller thoroughfares, and ordered a bottle of wine. I invited the proprietor to help with his own vintage, to which he readily agreed.

I commenced our conversation with an Englishman's *détente*, which caused the shopkeeper's bland smile to disappear with a rapidity I found amusing.

'Are you a partisan of the Count or the Queen?' I said.

Over his face an expression of horror dawned.

'Sir!' he stammered.

I regarded him calmly.

'Don't you understand my question? Whom would you prefer to reign over you?'

He glanced at me suspiciously. 'Who are you?' he asked.

'Oh,' I replied, 'I am merely a travelling Englishman.'

He wiped his forehead with a not too clean napkin.

'Let me advise you, my friend,' he said severely, 'not to ask that kind of question, or you may find yourself escorted to the frontier.'

'Why?' I asked lightly.

He made a gesticulation of hopeless exasperation.

'In England,' he asked, 'do you go into a public place and ask the first man you meet, in a loud voice, whether he has been guilty of a crime punishable with death?'

It began to dawn on me that things were taken seriously in this absurd little state.

'Surely you could reply in a loud voice you were not guilty?'

He looked at me pityingly. 'That might not help me—next week.'

Another customer coming in, he got up rather hastily, and came no more near me.

I fear I shall give the impression that I am a

somewhat tactless, even witless, person. In truth, I am not sure that this is not the case, for at dinner that same evening I behaved again like the typical Englishman abroad. Prince Slavoski, the Russian ambassador, a little, undersized man, with small searching eyes and a skin like parchment, had just been introduced to me, and we were standing together in the drawing-room awaiting the announcement of dinner.

'I hear there is a regular Tartar of a Queen here,' I remarked casually.

'Walter!' interposed my uncle, warningly.

The Prince looked at me and smiled.

'Our young friend forgets he is not in London, where all things are considered fit subjects for criticism,' he observed. 'But I wonder who has been giving him so adverse an opinion of her Majesty.'

'Oh, common gossip,' I said a little hastily, for I saw anxiety on my uncle's face. 'But I shall form my own opinion later on.'

'You are going to the ball to-night?'

I nodded. 'To hear the announcement of the Queen's betrothal,' I added a little maliciously.

The Prince's eyebrows descended over his eyes, which I discovered later was a common trick of his when annoyed. 'I fear you may be disappointed,' he said sharply. 'I have not heard that her Majesty contemplates any such step.'

'Haven't you?' I responded, with an air of surprise. 'How very odd!'

'Walter!' There was obvious annoyance in my uncle's voice.

'I fear our young friend puts too great trust in common gossip,' said the Prince, eyeing me with some disfavour.

I shrugged my shoulders. 'I dare say you know more about the matter than I do,' I said indifferently.

At that moment dinner was announced, and we descended to the dining-room. I found myself opposite to Prince Slavoski.

'So you have not yet met the Queen?' he observed.

I shook my head. 'My uncle has promised to present me this evening.'

'You will find her a most charming woman,'

he said, with some emphasis. 'In fact, I should warn you not to lose your heart to her.'

'There is no fear of that.'

'Oh, you are too confident.—Lord Carton,' he went on, suddenly turning to my uncle, 'I shall be forced to leave you the moment we have dined, for I have an audience with the Queen. Will you permit your nephew to escort me, so that I may give him the privilege of an early presentation to her Majesty?'

My uncle looked a little puzzled. 'You are very good, but'—

'I should like to go,' I put in.

'Oh, then we will consider it settled,' responded Slavoski urbanely.

My uncle looked at me a trifle anxiously.

'You will say nothing likely to offend her Majesty. It will quite spoil my evening if I find you being led out to execution as I enter.'

'I am always discreet,' I replied coolly.

My uncle laughed vexedly. 'An undergraduate at court reminds me of a bull in a china-shop. But if you will go, I don't doubt the Prince will see you behave yourself.'

'I have already warned him not to lose his heart to the Queen,' said Slavoski.

'It will be enough if he does not make an avowal before I arrive,' replied my uncle.

Dinner had hardly ended before Slavoski rose. I made a movement to do likewise, but he stopped me.

'I am not yet ready to start,' he said. 'There is a letter I must write. If I may be permitted, I will go to the library. Perhaps you will join me in a quarter of an hour.' He left the room with a low bow to the assembled guests.

The servants were handing round cigars, when my uncle beckoned me to his side.

'I don't know what Slavoski means,' he said in a low tone. 'He evidently has some purpose in asking you to accompany him. Just be cautious, there's a good boy.'

I nodded. As the quarter of an hour was up, I went out of the room and found the Prince ready to start.

'Shall we walk?' he asked. 'It is only a quarter of a mile to the palace.'

I assented, and he took my arm. We walked together down the avenue that led towards the town, in the centre of which the palace stands. We had not gone far before a figure stepped out of the dark shadows and confronted us. The movement had been so sudden that I drew back. The figure was that of a man, heavily shrouded in a dark cloak, for all the world like the villain in a transpontine melodrama.

'What do you want?' asked Slavoski sharply.

'Forgive me, your Excellencies,' came the reply in a gruff voice; 'but if you are going to the palace I would beg you to deliver a letter to the Queen's own hands.'

'Nonsense,' replied Slavoski; 'deliver your own letter.'

'It is a matter of life or death,' said the man.

'Your life or death?' asked Slavoski. 'That is a matter of no consequence.'

The man bowed himself almost to the ground.

'It is of the Queen I speak.' He held out a letter.

Slavoski took it contemptuously between his finger and thumb and looked at it in the dim light.

'A begging-letter, I suppose. A petition of some kind. Take it.' He returned it to the man, who received it back reluctantly.

'I would beg that you would deliver it to the Queen's own hand.'

'It is impossible,' said Slavoski. 'I cannot be the letter-carrier of every knave I meet in the highways.'

The man raised his hands imploringly. 'I swear that it means much to the Queen; and he who hands it to her will merit her gratitude.'

'I know all about that,' said Slavoski derisively.

The man turned to me. 'Will not this high-born young gentleman do me this signal favour?'

I hesitated a moment. 'All right,' I answered. I took the letter from the man and shoved it into my pocket.

'The Queen's hands alone,' said the man warningly as we passed on.

Slavoski took my arm again, and for a little while we walked on in silence. When he spoke I thought I noted a ring in his voice that had not been there before.

'No,' he said, 'I don't expect any announcement of a betrothal to-night.'

As we approached the palace there was already a stream of carriages passing through the iron gates that divided the grounds from the road. A block had brought the string of vehicles to a standstill; and as we passed through the side gate the lights over the entrance threw into strong profile the faces of the inmates of one of the carriages. I uttered a sudden exclamation.

'Bless my soul—the vintner's daughter!'

'What do you mean?' asked Slavoski.

'Did you not notice the lady in that carriage? I had the pleasure of officiating at her marriage yesterday. A most romantic affair!'

'I did not notice the lady,' he replied; 'but you are evidently making a mistake. There are no vintners' daughters who have the *entrée* to the palace.'

'Oh, but I am certain!' I protested. I told him in a few words of the marriage that had taken place.

He laughed incredulously, telling me I was mistaken. 'It is apparent that a vintner's daughter who marries a corporal would not be on the Queen's list of guests.'

'I am perfectly sure I am right,' I persisted, annoyed at his incredulity. 'I could not possibly

forget the lady's face; she is the most lovely creature I have ever seen.'

'My young susceptible friend——' he began unbelievably; and then he stopped short, turned on his heel, and bounded with surprising agility back to the entrance of the gardens. I watched him peer into the carriage window, and waited till he rejoined me.

'Well,' I asked, 'who is she?'

'You are quite sure of your story?'

'Certain,' I replied.

We were ascending the flight of steps that led up to the entrance of the palace. The place was brilliantly lighted. Glancing at Slavoski's face, I was surprised to see that it had turned to a yellower hue than ever, and his eyes were glittering strangely.

'The lady whom you mistake for a vintner's daughter,' he said slowly, 'is the Princess Kata, the Queen's cousin.'

We had passed into the entrance-hall, and I confess to being impressed by the brilliance of the scene before me. A magnificent marble staircase ran up through the centre of the hall, lined on both sides by the soldiers from the Queen's bodyguard. As we slowly ascended they came to the salute. It was a case of reflected glory, no doubt; but a sense of exhilaration came over me. Here was I, an undergraduate who, a few months ago, had been forced to bolt down an alley to escape the unwelcome attentions of a proctor, walking between a double line of blue-coated warriors who saluted as I passed.

At the top of the staircase we passed through the ballroom, which was as yet but very scantily filled.

'Tell me,' said the Prince, 'if you observe your friend the corporal.'

I nodded, determining, with sudden caution, to do nothing of the kind. I was annoyed that my want of thought should have been the means of

revealing to Slavoski a marriage which was evidently intended to be secret. The Prince, too, was the centre of many a plot and counterplot, and his designs might be assisted by the information which I had unwittingly afforded him. Certainly I had noticed a scarcely concealed jubilation about his manner, which made me fear I had been the means of giving him information which he esteemed of value. I ground my teeth at my own want of care; for I need hardly say all my sympathies were with the pretty girl and the so-called corporal whose marriage I had witnessed the previous day.

We went down a corridor into an anteroom. Slavoski beckoned to a page in waiting.

'Kindly let her Majesty know I am in attendance.'

The page bowed and vanished.

'I must ask you to be good enough to wait here for a few minutes,' said Slavoski. 'It is essential that I speak with the Queen in private; but I will not keep you long.'

The page was beckoning him. He left me and entered the Queen's apartment.

I looked round. With the exception of the youthful page, who was pirouetting on the tiled floor to the strains of the distant band, there was no one in the room. On the walls were some marvellous frescoes depicting events in the history of Herzogia, and I made the circuit of the room scrutinising them. I would have entered into conversation with the aforesaid page if he had not seemed so absorbed in the practice of his steps.

At length the Prince appeared at the door.

'Come,' he said abruptly. Evidently his interview had not been satisfactory, for his eyebrows were drawn down and there was a savage gleam in his eyes.

I went to him. He held back the curtain from the door.

'Enter,' he said; 'the Queen has graciously consented to receive you.'

THE 'SKY-SCRAPERS' OF NEW YORK.

By FREDERICK BLACK.



THE present century has witnessed the accomplishment of many marvellous undertakings, and the ancient Seven Wonders no longer may lay claim to a prominent place in the world's list of greatest works. If one were asked to-day to enumerate the most notable modern wonders, the task would not be easy. Not least, however, among the many claimants for the honour of inclusion in such a category would rank those colossal structures of steel and stone that the enterprise (and audacity, one is tempted to add) of our Transatlantic friends

is causing to multiply in the larger cities of the Western continent.

In New York and Chicago these latter-day Towers of Babel—yelept 'sky-scrapers' in the expressive vernacular tongue—are becoming more and more numerous. Boston and Philadelphia also are able to count an increasing number amongst their buildings. The statement has been made more than once that the majority of these monster exhibitions of the architect-engineer's skill owe their existence chiefly to the urban rivalry that finds expression amongst the peoples of the great commercial centres of the West; and

though there may be just the least grain of truth in this, a reason of much greater weight lies in the universal tendency of American business interests to centralise in the smallest possible area, thus affording the utmost facilities for conducting a maximum of transactions and negotiations in a minimum of time.

The modern tall building of 'sky-scraper' type may be said to have originated in New York when the 'Washington' of thirteen stories was erected in 1884. Chicago at that time had nothing over eight stories; but the grass was not long allowed to grow under her citizens' feet, and building after building continued to rise, each one a little higher than New York's last, until at length the municipal authorities felt impelled to restrain the soaring ambitions of the designers by imposing a limit above which they considered human beings should not be expected to ascend for the performance of their daily business. To this day, however, the New York law remains without any prohibition of the same nature, an omission of which due advantage is taken, as testified by the building of twenty-nine stories and total height of 386 feet from pavement to lantern, now in course of construction at Park Row, near the City Hall.

Owing to the peculiar geographical position of America's commercial capital—the city is built upon a river-island fourteen miles in length and but three in average width, the business quarter being confined to the southern end—there is much to be said in favour of its 'sky-scrappers' that will not apply with the same force to other and differently situated towns. To accommodate the enormous number of firms who require city offices it is evident that building must either go on extending along the island—'up town,' as the inhabitants term it—or, on the other hand, it must needs rise in a perpendicular direction. The problem is being solved by building upwards, a solution only rendered possible by the modern achievements of science in steel construction and hoisting apparatus. In the other cities before mentioned, the guiding motive originally was simply the demand for centralisation, with its accompanying facilities and convenience. This in turn caused the value of land to appreciate enormously, and now the two factors reacting upon each other have fairly perpetuated the 'sky-scraper.'

Let us suppose ourselves upon the deck of a steamer having just passed in through the Narrows from the ocean and proceeding towards the city that constitutes America's front-door. Stretched away in front for some six miles lies a broad sheet of water—more sea than river, though bordered by land on either side. The surrounding scene is one of great beauty; but from it our eyes wander back again and again to the picture ahead that is rapidly becoming more distinct as the vessel's bows cleave the waters

of the bay. Against a sky of Italian blue we see ten, fifteen, twenty—we know not how many—buildings towering aloft to a tremendous height, scarce two of the same shape, some square-topped, some surmounted by domes, but all alike clear and well defined to our vision in an atmosphere of marvellous purity. There is no order about their grouping; each appears to have arisen where it listed, springing up from among its more lowly neighbours as a monarch tree of the forest rears its head far above its less sturdy fellows. If it be winter-time, a dense white cloud of steam will be issuing from the highest point on the roof of each, twisting and swirling in the wind, always pouring forth, but melting into nothingness after rising a few feet into the clear air. This visible token of the imprisoned forces of Nature that man has chained in the nethermost part of these buildings to do his bidding in lighting, heating, and the performance of other tasks might be taken, with very little effort of the imagination, for the breath of so many giants, each fulfilling within those lofty walls the behests of his lord and master.

Arrived off the Battery, the southernmost point of Manhattan Island and the city, we now can see up two great waterways—that to the right the East River, spanned by the great suspension-bridge, and separating Brooklyn from New York, thence leading to the Sound that flows between Long Island and the mainland; and that to the left the Hudson, along which our course lies for a couple of miles. At this point we may notice that, tall though the towers of the famed bridge are, many a building is now able to look down upon them with ease. For the remainder of our journey the steamer is passing the business portion of the 'Empire City,' never more than a few hundred yards from where the streets terminate at the numerous wharfs; and, as one by one the tall buildings appear to glide by, we are afforded a perfect view—one that enables proper perspective to have full play while still including all the architectural detail that graces the exterior of the structures.

The famous thoroughfare, Broadway, in its lower or 'down-town' part, is the locality where the majority of the 'sky-scrappers' are situated. Going on a tour down it, and omitting to specially notice buildings of twelve stories or less, we come to the offices of the New York Life Insurance Company—but recently completed—at the corner of Leonard Street. This structure is of thirteen stories, surmounted on the main front by a clock-dome equal in height to another four stories, and is remarkable for the great area it occupies, extending back to Elm Street. Then, farther down, facing the City Hall Park, is the Home Life Building of sixteen stories and gabled superstructure, completely dwarfing the little fellow of five stories adjoining it on the north side, and even rising above its southern neighbour, the Postal

Telegraph Building, which counts but fourteen stories. On the opposite side of Broadway, at Anne Street, stands the St Paul, one of the most noticeable of all the gigantic office buildings in the city, consisting of twenty-five stories, and having in addition the customary basement. From its roof we might drop a plumb-line 307 feet in length to the pavement beneath! Situated on the corner and without any of its tall brethren very near, its limited area at first conveys to the mind the impression of a huge chimney-stack pierced by windows and adorned with stone frills and furbelows. One other building in New York reaches to a greater height (excluding the Manhattan Life, the front of which is capped by dome and lantern)—namely, the American Surety Company's home at Pine Street and Broadway. On a site only 84 feet 6 inches by 85 feet 6 inches, this building rises to a sheer height of 314 feet, and yet contrives to look graceful! Though practically a box of square section, flat-ended and having nearly four times the length of its width, the cunning of the architect has relieved its white sides by stone ledge and gilded corona, so that somewhat of the ornamental is imparted, in addition to strength. It contains twenty-one stories, nearly four hundred rooms, and cost £300,000; the land upon which it stands costing a like amount. The Manhattan Life Building, to which reference has just been made, is a short distance farther south and close to Wall Street. It has a frontage into which rows of only five windows are let. The site measures 67 feet by 125 feet, and cost slightly over £270,000. Its seventeen stories attain to a height of 254 feet, and the fine dome adds another 94 feet. The Bowling Green and the Washington Buildings, the last two on Broadway, are side by side; the former's sixteen stories of glazed white brick constituting a most admirable background, when viewed from either Battery Park or the harbour, for its more picturesque neighbour, whose thirteen stories of red brick relieved by white facings show to the greatest advantage against it. The Washington, as mentioned before, was erected in 1884, when thirteen stories was deemed high. Its commanding situation, looking out over the harbour, and its striking appearance entitle it to notice, though as a tall building it has been forced long since to take a secondary place.

Of other buildings, brief mention need only be made here of the National Bank of Commerce, nineteen stories; the Commercial Cable, twenty-one stories; and the Gillinder, nineteen stories *plus* a tower, and possessing only three windows in the end-width of each floor. In the well-known Printing House Square on 'Newspaper Row' stands the *World* Building (294 feet), practically a four-sided shaft of fourteen stories, on which rests a very high dome, so that in outline the whole structure resembles a Titanic potato-masher stood on end, with the handle uppermost; the *New York Times* offices, thirteen stories; and the

other more or less elevated headquarters of the city's daily press, as well as the American Tract Society's Building, which is twenty-three stories and 290 feet high, being in the same vicinity.

All the foregoing buildings have been designed for office purposes, and in many instances the owners themselves occupy at least two floors, generally including the ground one when this is not given up entirely to main hall, stalls for shops, elevator entrances, and so on; the remaining floors being let in suites of two, three, or more rooms to various commercial companies and individuals. Offices having a total area of 150 to 250 square feet are not uncommon units, and usually rent without difficulty.

The completion of a new building in the business district—and all new ones are by virtue of necessity tall, for otherwise interest on the capital sunk in the land could never be earned—is the signal for an exodus of scores of firms from old and less perfectly equipped offices to the latest addition to the ranks of the 'sky-scrappers.' Indeed, it not infrequently occurs that long before the workmen have applied the finishing touches the tenants have entered and are busy transacting business. This continual desertion of the older premises is partly responsible for the existence of the great and increasing number of new structures; the former cannot be allowed to stand empty, and consequently are pulled down to give place to the latter. That there must be some limit to this peculiar phase of municipal development is evident, though to define exactly what is that limit would be a matter of considerable difficulty.

The capacity (if such a term may be permitted) of the 'sky-scraper' is prodigious. The majority that have come into being during the last few years possess about four hundred rooms each. One hundred firms, individually occupying on an average three to four apartments, perhaps will not appear to be a very goodly company; but there are few cities in the world able to offer proper accommodation to an equal number on a plot of ground only 85 feet square! Where the space has been available, some buildings contain from thirty-five to forty, and even more, offices per floor, so that one roof actually covers nearly a thousand separate rooms. Surely centralisation could go no farther!

That the comfort and convenience of the big population thus gathered within four walls require an ample supply of thoroughly modern appliances goes without saying, and when it is explained that the landlord undertakes to provide these and keep them in operation, it will be clear that system and perfect order reign in every department of the vast establishment, owing to the absence of any divided control, and the uniformity of all apparatus employed. Lighting, heating, ventilating, and cleaning of offices are attended for the tenant; the elevator service, and a tele-

phone system connected through from the building exchange to the central exchange in the district, are always at his command; and without leaving the premises he may post his letters in a government mail-box, lunch and dine in a restaurant, forward telegrams, despatch messengers, and do much else besides.

A tour of inspection through one of these nineteenth-century wonders is a fascinating experience. Entering from the street through a handsome portico, flanked on either hand by large pillars of polished granite, we find ourselves in a spacious hall, with tiled floor, marble walls, and highly ornamented ceiling. On one side stands a row of neat 'stores,' where cigars and tobacco, fruit and confectionery, newspapers—the American is the most inveterate newspaper-buyer in the world—stamps and postcards, may be purchased; while not infrequently fancy goods and small articles of clothing are offered for sale. A continuous throng of people is passing to and fro between the main doorway and the elevator entrances—a throng that seems to suffer no diminution in numbers throughout the whole day. Pressing along past the elaborate wrought-iron grille that guards the base of the seven elevator shafts, we come to a wide flight of stone steps, down which let us descend to the basement where is situated the machinery that ministers to the wants of the tenants overhead.

These basements are well entitled to rank amongst the 'sights' of the New World city. Spotlessly clean, practically odourless—their white-tiled walls and floors reflecting back the flashing light thrown upon them by the rapidly moving polished rods and cranks of the engines, while on every side the soft rays from the electric lamps illuminate the scene—they indeed form a spectacle of real beauty.

In this abode of Vulcan we see the engines and dynamos that generate the current for lighting every room and passage in the mammoth structure above us, and that supply power to the elevators (if these are of the electric type) and the ventilating fans which in the heat of summer propel refreshing breezes throughout the offices. Here also are the steam pumps that deliver water to the tanks high up in the building, and maintain a constant hot and cold service to the multitude of radiators and lavatory taps respectively. Should the elevator installation work upon the hydraulic principle, the powerful pumps and rams that impart the necessary pressure to the water and thence motion to the cars will be found here also. In the cellar below us are the boilers—five or six in number and of a water-tube pattern—furnishing between 700 and 800 horse-power. The whole of this extensive plant is arranged in duplicate, so that no suspension of any function it has to perform may reasonably occur. The fuel employed is a 'hard' description of coal, extensively used all over New York, from the

combustion of which the smoke is practically *nil*. Though the temptation to linger is strong, we must now retrace our steps to the ground floor, for there is much to see above.

The ascent of a 'sky-scraper' is obviously accomplished by only one practical method—by means of the elevator, or lift, as it is called in England. That iron lattice-work we see before us contains the sliding doors admitting to seven different cars, and the placards above each entrance indicate their respective numbers, and in the case of the farther three the fact that they are 'Express to 15th Floor,' the explanation of which is that these cars make no stop between the ground and 15th story, but serve from that one to the top. The four other elevators are 'locals,' calling at all floors up to and including the 14th. By this arrangement the traffic is prevented from becoming unduly congested, and crowding of the cars is minimised. Just above each door is placed, on the metal screen, a glass tube or gauge about a foot in length, and marked with a scale whose divisions correspond to the various floors above. Within the tube a coloured liquid reveals the exact position and direction of movement of the controlling car by rising and falling in synchronism with it. These ingenious indicators are fitted on every floor, work with the greatest precision, and are an indispensable convenience.

Previous to stepping into one of the 'Express' elevators, we may notice the large directory of the building let into one side of the hall. On its white marble face appear in black lettering an imposing collection of names, arranged on a system that is simplicity itself. Each floor is allotted one hundred numbers—though it never has rooms to receive them all—the hundreds signifying the floor, the tens and units the room. Thus, if the address of the New York X Company is '1735 Clouds Building,' we know at once that their office is on the 17th floor, and the further determination of its position is a matter of ease. Other systems of numbering are in use in some buildings, but this one is the best.

Now let us take our places in the car. The constant influx of people from the street quickly fills each one as it returns to the ground level and empties its living freight, and the 'starter'—a uniformed official whose duty is to give each attendant the signal to start up—having passed the word, the light iron door is shut to with a click, the lever actuating the wire cable that communicates with the power apparatus is pushed forward, and immediately we rise with a rapidity that gives us the impression of having painlessly parted company with our stomachs. Floor after floor appears to fly down, and through the interstices of each elevator door that we pass a momentary glance is obtained—too brief, however, to even enable the names painted on the offices that face towards us to be read. Up, up we noiselessly rise, the white-tiled spaces on the walls

of the shaft alternating with the stone-gray-coloured iron doors at every story. One marvels that the attendant can tell the approach of the 15th floor, for so quickly do the distinguishing figures vanish that our untutored eyes fail to read them. But with accurate judgment he brings the car to a standstill, its floor on a level with that of the story. The door is opened with the usual click, some passengers step out, a few perhaps enter who have business to transact with firms higher up, another click, and our upward journey is resumed, this time with stoppages where required. In another two or three moments we arrive at the 23d floor, and, stepping out, are on the top story of a veritable 'sky-seraper'—one of the highest in the world.

Being provided with the *entrées* to one of the offices, we walk in, and on proceeding to the windows find a prospect of extraordinary magnificence lying stretched out 300 feet below. Directly underneath is Broadway, on which dwarfed cable cars go gliding slowly by, and Lilliputian beings move in and out amongst each other. Streets extending for miles are plainly discernible, the roofs of buildings we look down upon as on a map, while almost within the reach of a stone-throw flows the majestic Hudson, bearing upon its broad tide many a lordly liner, whose funnels—when it comes to rest at the pier—show to our gaze yawning chasms of Stygian blackness. Here and there in the vicinity rise other 'sky-scraper,' towering above their surroundings and seeming to be endowed with an individuality that is for the most part lost to the observation when they are viewed from *terra firma*. Most peculiar sight of all, perhaps, is the beautiful spire of Trinity Church, though we may be sure that the ecclesiastical architect never contemplated the possibility of its iron cross becoming an object that might be viewed from above. On the western bank of the river are Jersey City and Hoboken, with the Meadows on one side, and the rocky wall of the Palisades on the other; while away beyond, in the distance, the Orange Hills rear their grassy slopes. To the south the whole harbour lies glistening in one beautiful panorama; on yonder island the Goddess of Liberty—looking very diminutive—stands with arm uplifted and face turned seawards; curious ferry-boats surmounted by that survival of a past engineering practice, 'the walking beam,' creep hither and thither over the waters, leaving in their wake an ever-widening path fringed by white foam; while 'stately ships go on,' some just arrived from distant ports, to their haven beside the city; others, laden with the wealth of the Occident, wending their way towards the ocean. Changing our point of vantage so as to command a view to the eastward, we look across the East River to Brooklyn—once called 'the bedroom of New York,' but the name, no longer being applicable, has given place to

the more euphonious title, 'City of Churches;' to the left Long Island City, famous for its public men of Irish descent and pugnacious character, as well as for its redolent oilworks; to the right Governor's Island, with its picturesque but harmless fort and the harbour. Regretfully we at length resign the enjoyment of feasting our eyes upon such unparalleled views, to inspect the offices themselves.

In a general sense there is little difference between these on the majority of floors; those on the third story are not very dissimilar to the ones on the twenty-third; and hence, if we explore any suite, the prevailing character of all will be sufficiently indicated. Directing our attention, then, to the office in which we stand, it will be observed that it is a clean, well-lighted, airy apartment of about the average height. Neat desks of oak—all American office furniture seems to be constructed of oak—line the walls, and on a table in the centre of the room is placed the portable telephone communicating with the central exchanges. Incandescent electric lamps, for use at night or during the winter hours of darkness, are suspended overhead and cunningly arranged on the desks so that their light will fall upon the books and papers rather than upon the eyes. Type-writers are strongly in evidence; and perched in a convenient position is a revolving electric fan, which may be set working and turned to face in any direction at will. Even in the excessive humid heat of summer, however, these contrivances are not always required, for through the opened windows a delicious breeze of air will generally flow. There is no grate or fireplace, but a radiator, in which hot-water supplies the necessary heat for winter warming, occupies a corner. Leading off from this general office, and accessible from the corridor hall as well, is a manager's private room, fitted up in a somewhat similar style, and suitable for his special use. In some cases four, five, or six rooms will be given up to the needs of one firm or company; but as a rule less than the half-dozen suffice.

Returning to the passage, we notice in a prominent position hydrant and coiled hose, also the U.S. Government Mail Chute, in which letters being posted immediately descend to the large collecting-box in the main hall, from whence they are forwarded to the General Post-Office at close intervals. It is a curious experience to stand below in the evening, when the bulk of the correspondence gets posted, and watch this large mail-box swallowing the perpetual stream of letters fed into it from every floor by the chute, through whose clear glass front the missives are plainly discernible in their headlong flight to the pneumatic pillow at the base. It may be mentioned in passing that in not a few instances a postman is detailed off for duty exclusively in one building, and is kept busy the whole day in his frequent rounds of delivery.

And now we are ready for the return trip to

Mother Earth. It will not be amiss to walk down the stairs for a couple of floors, just to convince ourselves that they actually do exist. Following the sides of the elevator shafts, the stone steps—seldom trodden by feet—lead us down in the solitude of our own company, for we meet no one upon them. They exist, undoubtedly—and we are satisfied. An electric call summons the first car descending to where we stand, and in a few moments we are on our downward way. If the sensation felt by the inexperienced on travelling up is peculiar, that on going down is even more extraordinary. The first impression is that we ought to lose both our breath and feet, and yet do not; then our spines become pervaded by a thrilling, creepy feeling, as though they were vainly striving to become spiral springs, and involuntarily we develop a great desire to grip something. The remedy for this is simple, and consists in leaning firmly with the back against the side of the car, whereupon these vertiginous accompaniments of perpendicular travel at once subside. With a cushioning effect caused by the imprisonment of the air beneath it, the car comes to rest at the ground floor, and our brief visit to a typical 'sky-scraper' is concluded.

These structures have only been rendered at all possible by the introduction of the skeleton system of building, which in its turn has depended on the great advances that have been made in the manufacture of steel. To all outward appearance the 'sky-scraper' is a brick and stone erection; in reality it is a gigantic steel frame or skeleton, covered with a weather-proof veneer on the outside, and a fireproof (theoretically so, at any rate) casing on the inside. The Manhattan Life Building, for instance, contains considerably over 5000 tons of iron and steel in its beams, girders, and pillars; its walls vary in full width from but 12 to 16 inches, whereas, according to the laws of most cities, a solid brick wall carried to a corresponding height would require to be at least six feet thick at the base. With land costing at the rate of over £1,500,000 per acre, as it does in Lower Broadway, this margin cannot be disregarded if real estate is to be a profitable investment.

Two questions of great importance are involved in the tall building, neither of which has yet been conclusively settled—one, the durability of the steel; the other, the ability of the 'fireproof' work, should a fire occur, to adequately protect the metal from the terribly destructive effects of expansion followed by the contraction resulting from the application of cold water. The American Institute of Architects is itself divided on these matters; only time can settle the former, and one or two conflagrations occurring in typical high-class constructions the latter. It has been claimed that there are no materials employed in the building that will burn; the walls are steel and stone, the floors steel and

hollow fireclay blocks, the roof iron and tiles. But the fact must not be overlooked that each office contains much that is inflammable in the shape of fittings and furniture, and that its floor is generally covered with a light wooden sheath. The point of vital importance is, whether, in the event of these becoming ignited, any part of the steel's protector should prove vulnerable; if so, fire is an ever-present and real danger. Fortunately or unfortunately, the experience of the last few years does not go far towards revealing what result might be expected under such circumstances as might arise at any time. An article in *Cassier's Magazine* for March points out the dangers attendant on the building of such tall street structures, but also shows how these buildings may be rendered fireproof, cyclone-proof, lightning-proof, and earthquake-proof.

Few things in America may be regarded as having even approached a final stage of development, and doubtless the 'sky-scraper' will yet undergo many changes. Let us trust that an increase of area rather than an increase of height will be amongst the most important of these, and that some means will be devised to prevent the streets on which they stand from becoming the civilised prototypes of the cañons of Colorado or California—a fate which would seem to be not at all impossible.

MY GARDEN GATE.

A GREEN LANE winds across the down,
My garden gate without;
It leads away to London town,
With many a twist about!
Thither to and fro they come and go,
From early until late:
The young, the old, the high, the low,
They pass my garden gate!
They follow Fortune's dancing gleam,
Their hearts with hope elate,
While I sit there alone and dream,
Within my garden gate!

They come and go while I sit there,
I hear their laughter light;
They go with heads held high in air,
And eyes of hope made bright!
Alas! they do not come back so—
'Tis hard to fight with Fate;
But careworn, weary, sad and slow,
They pass my garden gate!
And some of them come back no more
To those who watch and wait.
Pray Heav'n they've found a happy shore
Beyond my garden gate!

The moments pass, the hours decay,
The seasons smile and frown,
And still the green lane winds away
Across the open down!
And still they follow, lad and lass,
Where Fortune beckons fair;
Nor stop to note the waving grass,
Or smell the scented air.
They follow Fortune's dancing gleam,
Their hearts with hope elate,
While I—I sit alone and dream
Within my garden gate!

CLIFTON BINGHAM.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

AN HISTORIC NIGHT IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

TAKE it that the pages of *Chambers's Journal* are strictly closed to purely party politics, and that within its leaves we are happily free from the strife of the polemic and the dialectic of the political partisan; but the present article has no political significance, and it espouses the cause of no party in the State.

The centre of the national life, in so far as questions of government or diplomacy are concerned, is generally believed to be the House of Commons; and it may, perhaps fairly enough and without arrogance, claim a pre-eminence as distinctively the 'Witenagemot,' or Parliament of the Nation. The House of Lords lives presumably, and also as a matter of everyday experience, in a calmer air and under serenest skies. The solemnity and decorum of its proceedings are seldom ruffled by bursts of impassioned eloquence or storms of party feeling, while the 'other House' is, alas! at times but a tempest-tossed ship of State; it seems to feel more acutely the emotions pertaining to the popular will, and it possesses a temperature which can readily rise to fever-heat and a pulse which beats, on occasion, with the force of cyclonic systems.

Yet, be that as it may, the centre of political interest was certainly transferred on the night of the 8th of July 1884 from the Representative to the Hereditary Chamber. It was the debate on the second reading of Mr Gladstone's Reform Bill of that year. The bill had been voted, in its successive stages, by considerable majorities in the House of Commons; but its passage through the Lords was more of an uncertainty, and the popular interest was keenly directed towards the action of the Upper Chamber in regard to the measure. An amendment to the second reading had been proposed by the late Earl Cairns, formerly Lord Chancellor of England in the Conservative administration, and it was said that peers who had not even seen the inside of their gilded chamber for years were coming up from the country in force to give it their support.

No. 33.—VOL. I.

[All Rights Reserved.]

The amendment was to the effect that, while that House would assent to an equalisation of the franchise, this should not be granted unless it were accompanied by a contemporary measure for the redistribution of seats. That, I may observe in passing, was a principle which was subsequently accepted by both parties in the State, and was given effect to by agreement between them in a bill which became law in the following session of parliament, and under which, among other results, the representation of Scotland was raised to its present quota of seventy-two members. But at the time of which I speak it was not admitted by the Liberal government of the day that redistribution ought necessarily to accompany the lowering and equalisation of the franchise, and a fierce controversy was being waged over the question of Reform or No Reform.

The debate had occupied the whole of the previous night, and stood adjourned. I was fortunate enough to secure, through the medium of an influential friend, a seat, or at least a place, under the gallery on the government side of the House near to the division door. Beside me, or rather immediately in front of me, were Mrs Gladstone and her daughter, now Mrs Drew. The House quickly filled, and an atmosphere of unwonted animation and suppressed excitement pervaded the place. All the approaches were thronged, and there were many applicants for admission whose claims had to be denied.

The Lord Chancellor took his seat on the woolsack punctually at half-past four, and by five the debate was in full swing. I am not going to weary my readers with any attempt to follow it. But it was, I believe, almost unique in recent times alike for the number of distinguished politicians and statesmen of eminence who took part in it, and for the serried ranks of peers, on both sides of the House, who came to vote on the question of the hour. The great division of the Liberal party on the question of Home Rule had not then taken place, and the speakers on the government side of the House included the late Lord Granville,

JULY 16, 1898.

the Duke of Argyll, the late Lord Selborne, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and several others of the first rank; while on the Opposition side the late Lord Derby, Lord Salisbury, and the late Lord Carnarvon, among others, delivered important speeches. Perhaps two of the best speeches made were those of the late Lord Brabourne (the Knatchbull-Hugessen of fairy-tale fame) and Lord Rosebery, who followed him, and who, although, of course, then well known as a fluent, graceful, and able speaker, and a coming politician of eminence, had not as yet held any high office in the State. In Gilbertian phrase, he likened the coronet of his brother-peer to a crown of thorns, 'for it had been,' he said, 'the noble Lord's consistent and miserable fate, ever since his elevation to that House, to be compelled, evidently against his own most ardent inclinations, always to vote in opposition to the party to which he had always been understood to belong.'

But the hour of dinner has come and gone, and now it is waxing late, while still the debate goes on with unabated vigour. The temper even of that august House is, for the time, keenly set, and there is an undertone of excitement and vital interest in the air, for every one feels that history is most probably even now being made. The galleries of the peeresses have filled to overflowing, and are ablaze with jewels. All the great 'political ladies' of the day are there. So also are full the galleries allotted to distinguished strangers and the diplomatic body. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Edinburgh, with the old Duke of Cambridge, are in their accustomed seats on the cross-benches; and but yesterday it is said that the well-polished hat of the Heir-Apparent was in serious danger of annihilation from the demonstrative eloquence and perfervid gesticulations of that well-known Scottish peer (speaking from the seat immediately behind His Royal Highness) who Mr Disraeli once said possessed, in an eminent degree, 'the cross-bench mind.' Round the steps at the back and sides of the throne are grouped a large number of privy councillors and Cabinet ministers, in the front rank of whom are prominently seen the alert figure of Mr Gladstone, with the never-forgotten flower in his button-hole, and the larger frame of Sir William Harcourt, while Mr Chamberlain is not far off. There were no portents *then* of coming separation and the breaking-up of Cabinets, although the seeming desertion of General Gordon in the far Soudan, during five long months of siege and stress, had even now given to the ministry its first keen blow!

The scene is indeed a brilliant one. The bright red-leather benches, the carved and gilded paneling of the walls, the polished candelabra, the crowded galleries, make up a wonderful combination of colour; while the necessary interests of motion and life are found in the gathering of peers temporal and spiritual (for the lawn of the bishop is there in great force) which sits below, and in the speech and action of the statesman and the orator.

The hands of the clock point towards the hour of twelve, and the end seems at last to be drawing near. All that can be said on both sides has apparently been said, the leaders of the House and of the Opposition have wound up the debate, the Foreign Secretary has taken up his royal-red despatch-boxes, Lord Salisbury has gracefully bestowed upon Lord Rosebery the title of 'the patron of Midlothian,' while several well-known peers have hurried in from the precincts in time to record their votes. The division-bell rings, and all strangers, below the gallery at least, have perforce to retire to the lobbies and await there the result of the vote. There is a subdued buzz of excitement and conversation, and one instinctively feels that a question of national import is hanging in the balance and will shortly be decided for good or ill.

The clock strikes one, and now a small group, joined for a few moments by the Prime Minister, and in which he is naturally the central figure, sits on the stone seats in one of the inner lobbies or stands about and waits. Somebody remarks—'I think it is Mrs Gladstone to her husband—' 'What will the country say of this to-morrow?' when suddenly the doors are thrown open, and there is an excited rush, in which we all join. But it is soon followed by a pervading silence as the figures of the division are read out, and the Lord Chancellor announces in stately tones that the 'Not Contents' have it. Nobody is surprised at the result, for the Opposition benches have been thickly peopled all through the night, and the weight of argument did seem also, somehow, to rest with them; but some of us wonder, nevertheless, with Mrs Gladstone, how the country will take it 'to-morrow.' The audience, however, quickly melts away, most of us glad to find, after the strain of listening to an eight-hours' debate, the seductions of a hansom homeward and a speedy repose, but the press-man and the journalist to his 'copy' and his 'leader-writing,' and to tell the British public, some four hours later—'How the Lords threw out the Franchise Bill.'



JOHN BURNET OF BARNS.

CHAPTER XL.—I MAKE MY PEACE WITH GILBERT BURNET.



ISLEPT till dawn the dreamless sleep of those who have drowned care in bodily exertion. It was scarce light when I awoke, and with the opening of the eyes there came with a rush the consciousness of my errand. I leaped out of bed, and sitting on the edge, considered my further actions.

First I sought to remove from my person some of the more glaring stains of travel. There was water in the room, bitter cold and all but frozen, and with it I laved my face and hands.

Then I opened the chamber door and stepped out into one of the long corridors. The house was still, though somewhere in the far distance I could hear the bustle of servants. I cast my mind back many years, and strove to remember where the room was in which the morning meal was served. I descended the staircase to the broad, high hall, but still there was no sign of other occupants. One door I tried, but it was locked; another with no better fate, till I began to doubt my judgment. Then I perceived one standing ajar, and, pushing it wide, I looked in. Breakfast was laid on the table, and a fire smoked on the hearth. I entered and closed the door behind me.

There was a looking-glass at the far end, and as I entered I caught a glimpse of my figure. Grim as was my errand, I could have laughed aloud at the sight. My hair unkempt, my face tanned to the deepest brown, my strange scarlet clothes, marred as they were by wind and weather, gave me a look so truculent and weird that I was half-afraid of myself. And then the humour passed, and all the suffering of the past, the hate, the despairing love, the anxious care, came back upon me in a flood, and I felt that such garb was fitting for such a place and such a season.

I warmed my hands at the blaze and waited. The minutes dragged slowly, while no sound came save the bickering of the fire and the solemn ticking of a clock. I had not a shade of fear or perturbation. Never in all my life had my mind been so wholly at ease. I waited for the coming of my enemy as one would wait on a ferry or the opening of a gate—quiet, calm, and fixed of purpose.

At last—and it must have been a good hour—I heard steps on the stair. Clearly my cousin had slept long after his exertions. Nearer they came, and I heard his voice giving some orders to the servants. Then the door was opened, and he came in.

At first sight I scarcely knew him, so changed was he from the time of our last meeting. He was grown much thinner and gaunter in countenance, nor was his dress so well cared for and trim as I remembered it. The high, masterful look which his face always wore had deepened into

something bitter and savage, as if he had grown heart-sick of the world and eared nought for the things which had aforetime delighted him. His habit of scorn for all that opposed him and all that was beneath him had grown with his years and power, and given him that look as of one born to command—ay, and of one to whom suffering and pain were less than nothing. As I looked on him I hated him deeply and fiercely, and yet I admired him more than I could bear to think, and gloried that he was of our family. For I have rarely seen a nobler figure of a man. I am not little, but in his presence I felt dwarfed. Nor was it only in stature that he had the pre-eminence, for his step was as light and his eye as keen as those of a master of fence.

He had expected a very different figure to greet him at the other side of the table. In place of a lissome maid he saw a grim, rough-clad man waiting on him with death in his eyes. I saw surprise, anger, even a momentary spasm of fear, flit across his face. He looked at me keenly; then with a great effort he controlled himself, and his sullen face grew hard as stone.

'Good-morning to you, Master John Burnet,' said he. 'I am overjoyed to see you again. I had hoped to have had a meeting with you in the past months among your own hills of Tweedside, but the chance was denied me. But better late than never. I bid you welcome.'

I bowed. 'I thank you,' I said.

'I have another guest,' said he, 'whom you know. It is a fortunate chance that you should both be present. The old house of Eaglesham has not held so many folk for many a long day. May I ask when you arrived?' The man spoke all the while with great effort, and his eyes searched my face as though he would wrest from me my inmost thoughts.

'An end to this fooling, Gilbert,' I said quietly. 'Marjory Veitch is no more in this house. With the escort of my servant she is on her road to Tweeddale. By this time she will be more than half-way there.'

He sprang at me like a wild thing, his face suddenly inflaming with passion.

'Yon, you'—he cried, but no words would come. He could only stutter and gape, with murder staring from his visage.

As for me, the passion in him roused in me a far greater.

'Yes,' I cried, my voice rising so that I scarce knew it for mine. 'Yon villain, liar, deceiver, murderer, by the living God, the time has now come for your deserts! You tortured my love and harassed her with hateful captivity; you slew her brother, your friend—slew him in his cups, like the coward you are; you drove me from my house and

lands; you made me crouch and hide in the hills like a fox, and hunted me with your hell-hounds; you lied and killed and tortured. But now I am free, and now you will find that I am your master. I have longed for this day—oh, for so long!—and now you shall not escape me. Gilbert Burnet, this earth is wide, but it is not wide enough for you and me to live together. One or other of us shall never go from this place.'

He made no answer, but only looked me straight in the face, with a look from which the rage died by degrees. Then he spoke slowly and measuredly. 'I think you are right, cousin John,' said he. 'The world is too small for both of us. We must come to a settlement.' And in his tone there was a spice of pity and regret. Then I knew that I had lied, and that this man was stronger than I.

For a little we stood looking across the table at each other. There was an extraordinary attraction in the man, and before the power of his keen eyes I felt my wits trembling. Then, with his hand, he motioned me to sit down. 'The morning air is raw, cousin John. It will be better to finish our meal;' and he called to his servant to bring in breakfast.

I have never eaten food in my life under stranger circumstances. Yet I did not fear aught, but satisfied my hunger with much readiness. As for him, he toyed and ate little. Once I caught him looking over at me with a shade of anxiety, of dread, in his gaze. No word passed between us, for both alike felt the time too momentous for any light talk. As the minutes fled I seemed to discern some change in his manner. His brows grew heavier, and he appeared to brood over the past, while his glance sought the pictures on the walls and my face in turn with something of fierceness. When all was over he rose and courteously made way for me to pass, holding the door wide as I went out. Then he led me to a little room at the other side of the hall, whence a window opened to the garden.

'You wish to be satisfied,' he said, 'and I grant you that the wish is just. There are some matters 'twixt me and thee that need clearing. But first, by your leave, I have something to say. You believe me guilty of many crimes, and I fling the charge in your teeth. But one thing I did unwittingly, and have often repented of. Michael Veitech fell by his own folly and by no fault of mine.'

'Let that be,' said I. 'I have heard another tale.'

'I have said my say; your belief matters nought to me. One thing I ask you: Where has the girl Marjory gone? If fate decides against you, it is but right I should have her.'

'Nay,' I cried passionately, 'that you never shall. You have caused her enough grief already. She hates the sight of you even as I, and I will do nothing to make her fall into your hands.'

'It matters little,' he said, with a shrug of his

great shoulders. 'It was only a trifling civility which I sought from you. Let us get to work.'

From a rack he picked a blade, one such as he always used in any serious affray, single-edged and basket-hilted. Then he signed to me to follow, and opened the window and stepped out.

The morning was murky and damp. Fog clothed the trees and fields, and a smell of rotteness hung in the air. I shivered, for my clothes were thin and old.

Gilbert walked quickly, never casting a look behind him. First we crossed the sodden lawn, and then entered the pine wood which I had skirted on the previous night.

In a little we heard the roaring of water and came to the banks of the stream, which, swollen by the melting snows, was raving wildly between the barriers of the banks. At the edge was a piece of short turf, some hundred yards square, and drier than the rest of the ground which we had traversed. Here Gilbert stopped and bade me get ready. I had little to do save cast my coat and stand stripped and shivering, waiting while my enemy took his ground.

The next I know is that I was in the thick of a deadly encounter, with blows rattling on my blade as fast as hail. My cousin's eyes glared into mine, mad with anger and regret, with all the unrequited love and aimless scheming of months concentrated in one fiery passion. I put forth my best skill; but it was all I could do to keep death from me. As it was I was scratched and grazed in a dozen places, and there was a great hole in my shirt which the other's blade had ripped. The sweat began to trickle over my eyes with the exertion, and my sight was half-dazed by the rapid play.

Now, it so happened that I had my back to the stream. This was the cause of my opponent's sudden violence, for he sought to drive me backwards, so that when I found myself near the water I might grow bewildered. But I had been brought up to this very trick, for in the old days, in Tweeddale, Tam Todd would take his stand near the Tweed and strive to force me back into the great pool. In my present danger these old memories came back to me in a flood, and in a second I was calm again. This, after all, was only what I had done a thousand times for sport. Could I not do it once for grim earnest?

In a very little I saw that my cousin's policy of putting all his strength out at the commencement was like to be his ruin. He was not a man built for long endurance, being too full in blood and heavy of body. Soon his breath came thick and painfully; he yielded a step, then another, and still a third; his thrusts lacked force and his guards were feeble. He had changed even from that tough antagonist whom I had aforetime encountered, and who taxed my metal to the utmost. Had it not been that my anger still held my heart, and admitted no room for

other thoughts, I would even have felt some compunction in thrusting at him. But now I had no pity in me. A terrible desire to do for him as he had done to my friends gripped me like a man's hand. The excitement of the struggle, and, perhaps, the peril to my own life, roused my dormant hate into a storm of fury. I know not what I did; but, shrieking curses and anathemas, I slashed blindly before me like a man killing bees. Before my sword-point I saw his face growing grayer and grayer with each passing minute. He was a brave man—this I have always said for him; and if any other in a like position, with an enemy at his throat and the awful cognisance of guilt, still keeps his stand and does not flee, him also I call brave.

Suddenly his defence ceased. His arm seemed to numb and his blade was lowered. I checked my cut and waited with raised point. An awful delight was in my heart, which now I hate and shudder to think on. I waited, torturing him. He tried to speak, but his mouth was parched, and I heard the rattle of his tongue. Still I delayed, for all my heat seemed turned into deadly malice.

Then his eyes left my face and looked over my shoulder. I saw a new shade of terror enter them. I chuckled, for now, thought I, my revenge had come. Of a sudden he crouched with a quick movement, bringing his hands to his face. I was in act to strike, when from behind came a crack, and something whistled past my ear. Then I saw my cousin fall groaning, with a bullet through his neck.

In a trice my rage was turned from him to the unknown enemy behind. With that one shot all rancour had gone from my heart. I turned; and there, running through the trees up the river-bank, I saw a man. At the first look I recognised him, though he was bent well-nigh double and the air was thick with fog. It was the fellow Jan Hamman.

I ran after him at top speed, though he was many yards ahead of me. I have never felt such lightness in my limbs. I tore through thicket and bramble, and leaped the brooks as easily as if I were not spent with fighting and weak from the toils of months. My whole being was concentrated into one fierce attempt, for a thousand complex passions were tearing at my heart. This man had dared to come between us; this man had dared to slay one of my house. No sound escaped my lips; but silently, swiftly, I sped after the fleeing figure.

He ran straight up-stream, and at every step I gained. Somewhere at the beginning he dropped his pistol; soon he cast away his cap and cloak; and when already he heard my hot breathing behind him, he cried out in despair and flung his belt aside. We were climbing a higher ridge, beneath which ran the stream. I was so near that I clutched at him once or twice; but each

time he eluded me. Soon we gained the top, and I half-stumbled, while he gained a yard. Then I gathered myself together for a great effort. In three paces I was on him and had him by the hair. But my clutch was uncertain from my faintness, and with a wrench he was free. Before I knew his purpose he swerved quickly to the side, and leaped clean over the cliff into the churning torrent below.

I stood giddy on the edge, looking down. There was nothing but a foam of yellow and white and brown from bank to bank. No man could live in such a stream. I turned and hastened back to my cousin.

I found him lying as I had left him, with his head bent over to the side and the blood oozing from his neck-wound. When I came near he raised his eyes and saw me. A gleam of something came into them; it may have been mere recognition, but I thought it pleasure.

I kneeled beside him with no feeling other than kindness. The sight of him lying so helpless and still drove all anger from me. He was my cousin, one of my own family, and with it all a gentleman and a soldier.

He spoke very hoarsely and feebly.

'I am done for, John. My ill-doing has come back on my own head. That man'—

'Yes,' I said, for I did not wish to trouble a man so near his end with idle confessions; 'I know; I have heard; but that is all past and done with.'

'God forgive me,' he said. 'I did him a wrong, but I have repaid it. Did you kill him, John?'

'No,' I said; 'he leaped from a steep into the stream. He will be no more heard of.'

'Ah!' and his breath came painfully. 'It is well. Yet I could have wished that one of the family had done the work. But it is no time to think of such things. I am going fast, John.'

Then his speech failed for a little, and he lay back with a whitening face.

'I have done many ill deeds to you, for which I crave your forgiveness.'

'You have mine with all my heart,' I said hastily. 'But there is the forgiveness of a greater, which we all need alike, you would do well to seek.'

He spake nothing for a little. 'I have lived a headstrong, evil life,' said he, 'which God forgive. But it is not meet to go canting to your end, when in your health you have crossed His will.'

Once again there was silence for a little space. Then he reached out his hand for mine.

'I have been a fool all my days. Let us think no more of the lass, John. We are men of the same house, who should have lived in friendship. It was a small thing to come between us.'

A wind had risen and brought with it a small, chill rain. A gust swept past us, and carried my cast-off cloak into the bushes. 'Ease my head,' he

gasped, and when I hasted to do it I was even forestalled. For another at that moment laid his hand on him, and with a little shudder his spirit passed to the great and only Judge of man's heart.

I walked off for help with all speed, and my thoughts were sober and melancholy. Shame had taken me for my passion and my hot fit of revenge—ay, and pity and kindness for my dead opponent.

The old days when we played together by Tweed, a thousand faint, fragrant memories, came back to me; and in their light the last shades of bitterness disappeared. Also the great truth came home to me as I went, how little the happiness of man hangs on gifts and graces, and how there is nought in the world so great as the plain virtues of honour and heart.

D E N T ' S.

FEW towns of its size possess the same world-wide celebrity as sleepy old Worcester, noted alike, as our geography books used to say, for its porcelain, its sauce, and its gloves, and contributing to the enjoyment of the gourmet, the delight of the art-collector, and the satisfaction of the fashionable world. It is in keeping with the character of the town, with its fine cathedral and its general air of old-worldness, that all its three famous products are of the nature of luxuries, rather than necessities of life.

Dent's great glove factory (which, by the way, has no longer any connection with the family whose name it still bears) claims to be the largest as well as the oldest business of the kind in the world. For well over a century it has held a foremost place in the trade, and it still shows no sign of giving way before its numerous competitors. The firm employs in Worcester some twelve hundred indoor workers, and from fifteen hundred to two thousand outdoor, besides many others, who in the out-lying villages, and even as far as distant Devonshire, are engaged in the production of hand-made goods.

The visitor to the factory, which is a veritable hive of busy industry, steam-power being used to only a very slight extent, is sure of a courteous reception; and although there is not here, as in the Porcelain Works, an official specially detailed to attend to strangers, he will have every facility afforded him for making himself acquainted with all the processes of manufacture going on within the huge four-storied building.

First, in the stock-rooms, he will see pile upon pile of skins of all sorts, stored as they have been received, in their half-dressed condition, from the leather-workers of the Continent. For most of these—chevrettes, kids, and lambskins—the chief sources of supply are Russia and the highlands of Germany. Then there are the reindeer-skins, with their beautifully soft texture, and the heavy Cape sheepskins used in the manufacture of driving and riding gloves. English leather, of any kind, is of very little value for glove-making, being generally too porous. Indeed, it is almost a pre-requisite that the skins to be used should, in the living animal, have been covered with hair rather than wool.

After having been stored for some months to allow the dressing thoroughly to permeate them,

the skins are carefully assorted according to size and quality, and are then subjected to a thorough washing in enormous rotary vats, from which they are removed to be again dressed with water in which the yolk of eggs has been mixed. This process is necessary to give them the required softness, and several hundred thousands of eggs are thus used every year.

The skins are now ready for dyeing, which is done either by immersion in great revolving cylinders, or 'tumblers,' where they are kept in continual motion till the required shade has been obtained, or by the much more delicate process of brushing, which demands a considerable amount of skill, and is employed only when it is desired to keep the inner side of the glove white, as for the lighter and finer kinds of goods.

After dyeing, the skins are quickly dried at a temperature of about 120°, and are then said to be 'in the crust,' a technical term which very well describes their hard, shrivelled appearance. In this state they are much darker in colour than the finished glove is intended to be, a medium shade of brown being, in the crust, scarcely distinguishable from a soot black. But now the staker takes them in hand, and, by drawing them in all directions over a rounded metal edge, he soon restores them to their natural elasticity, and at the same time very greatly reduces the depth of colour. Taking up a dirty-looking bit of leather, which to the unpractised eye seems absolutely worthless, he turns out, in less than two minutes, an exquisitely soft skin of the most delicate fawn or pearl-gray hue.

The skins are now ready for paring, or dolcing, a process which requires great skill and care on the part of the operator. Indeed, all the labour in connection with this industry is of a highly skilled character, the apprentices, in some branches of the work, being strictly indentured for seven years. By the paring, which is done with a keen-edged knife of a special shape, the thickness of the skin is reduced and made uniform over the whole surface; and, at the same time, the roughnesses of the under side are removed, so that it presents a smooth and pleasant surface to the hand. The very large amount of waste from this process is collected, and forms a valuable dressing for the land, readily bought up by the farmers in the neighbourhood.

This is the last of the preparatory processes, and

the skins, having been again assorted according to size and quality, are now ready to pass into the cutting-room, where the actual glove-making begins. There they are first of all cut into 'trunks,' or square pieces of the size of a glove, the back and front being in one piece, and from the scraps remaining the thumb-pieces and fourchettes are taken. The trunks, with their fittings, then pass into the punching-room, where, by one movement, the glove is punched out by means of a press bearing a block-knife of the required shape. The thumb is then similarly punched out from its own piece, an ordinary kid skin of average size giving usually three complete gloves.

The cut gloves again pass through the sorter's hands, and from him they are sent on to the women's side of the factory. Here one is struck at once with the cleanness and freshness of the workrooms, as well as with the cheerful and neat appearance of the workers, and the frank relations that seem to exist between them and their employers. Indeed, this last-mentioned point is observable over the whole factory, the entire freedom from restraint of the operatives under the manager's eye, and the perfectly respectful frankness with which they supplement his explanations, being pleasantly noteworthy.

The first process in the women's department is the 'pointing,' or ornamental stitching generally seen on the backs of gloves. Most of this is done by hand, and with a dexterity that is simply bewildering to the unskilled onlooker; the glove, previously pierced by machinery, being held firmly

on a cleverly devised frame, and the needle working back and forward more rapidly than the eye is able to follow. It would be difficult to imagine anything more nearly approaching the precision and quickness of a delicate machine than is exhibited by the fingers of some of the girls engaged in this work. The writer, standing with watch in hand, saw the three double lines of heavy tannouring on the back of a dogskin driving-glove begun and finished within two minutes.

After the pointing comes the closing, which is done by sewing-machines of special and most ingenious design, several different kinds being used for different classes of work. As unlike as possible to the familiar family 'lock-stitch' are these bits of curious, and even dainty, mechanism, some of which are positive triumphs of the inventor's art. Especially fascinating is the machine used for closing the fingers of one class of gloves. In this machine the needle works into the point of an upright steel finger, which carries within itself a shuttle of diminutive size, and the glove, fitted over this finger, is fed automatically upwards.

The finishing, which is the next process, and includes button-holing, binding, &c., is mostly done outside; then follows the final examination and sorting; next the stamping and boxing; and then the finished gloves pass into the warehouse, from which they are sent out to every corner of the civilised world, having gone through between twenty and thirty pairs of hands before they are ready to adorn those of the fortunate person for whom all this labour and skill are expended.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER III.



ENTERED the Queen's apartment feeling a little nervous on being for the first time in my life ushered into the presence of royalty.

'You had better take this opportunity of handing her that letter,' whispered the Prince.

'All right.'

We passed through a room in which several ladies were sitting. They cast down their eyes modestly as we passed. And then I came into the Queen's presence. She was sitting in a chair by the side of her writing-desk, her cheek on her hand, her eyes looking into vacancy. As we entered she rose with an air of weariness.

She was undoubtedly a magnificent specimen of womanhood, and I could understand the warning I had received not to lose my heart; but, though I am susceptible enough, in all conscience, to female charms, I could see at the first glance that there need be no fear for me in this case. It is not only beauty in woman which attracts a man; and beyond Queen Elma's physical attractions I could

see no sign of others of a more alluring kind. She was tall and voluptuous in appearance, with black hair, full red lips, and dark, stormy eyes. Her complexion had a dusky tinge, which added to her gipsy-like appearance. She looked a woman to be feared rather than loved.

She received me most graciously.

'Welcome to Herzoglia,' she said.

I bowed and kissed her extended hand. She regarded me somewhat critically.

'You are a very apparent Englishman,' she was pleased to say, 'and the English are our traditional friends. I can always depend on your uncle for good, sound advice.' I thought she looked at the Prince with defiance in her air. 'He, at any rate, has no ulterior ends to serve.'

The Prince smiled a little forcedly.

'I trust I may be allowed to reckon myself one of your Majesty's friends,' I murmured.

'I have need of them, God knows,' she replied, almost passionately, and speaking, as it seemed to me, at the Prince.

'He is not always the friend who advises

according to one's inclinations,' observed the Prince, with some sententiousness. He spoke urbanely enough, but there was a look of irritation on his face.

The Queen made a little impatient movement. 'If we could only distinguish between friends and enemies! But when they are indistinguishable it is best to take no advice at all, but to act according to one's judgment.'

The Prince shrugged his shoulders. 'The few words of caution I have ventured to address to your Majesty have been prompted by a single-hearted desire for your welfare.'

'No doubt,' said the Queen. The irony in her tone was apparent. 'And yet I am as strongly advised by others to the course from which you endeavour to dissuade me.'

'I am convinced that the step you contemplate is a false one, and I can only hope that this may be made clear to you before it is too late.'

'Who will make this clear to me?' asked the Queen scornfully.

The Prince looked at her steadily.

'I hope to be able to do so,' he replied slowly.

The Queen looked up at him quickly.

'Speak out,' she cried. 'For the last few days you have hinted mysteriously at something in your knowledge. Now is the time to disclose it. Tell me now, or be for ever silent.'

'You mistake me,' replied the Prince hastily. 'I have nothing to tell.'

A look of relief passed over the Queen's face. The Prince went on:

'Your Majesty believes that the Count is influenced solely by his love.' There was an almost imperceptible sneer in his voice; but, although slight, it was not unnoticed by the Queen. She sprang to her feet—a tall, queenly figure.

'Is that so surprising?' she asked proudly.

'It is surprising it is not so,' said the Prince; 'but it is not so, or common rumour has much maligned the Count.'

The Queen brought her hand down heavily on the table by her side, and a flower-vase that stood on it fell and broke. I remember watching the little stream of water as it made its way to the edge and trickled to the floor.

'Lies!' she said fiercely. 'All lies! He has told me so himself.'

'I am glad,' responded the Prince suavely. Then he looked round and his eye met mine. 'But our conversation cannot interest our young friend.'

The Queen glanced at me with a little start. 'I had forgotten your presence,' she said, turning to me. 'But I know I can trust your discretion.' She smiled pleasantly, and I bowed in reply. 'You are doubtless anxious to attend the ball. Our Herzogian ladies will not forgive me if I detain you longer.'

The Prince looked at me keenly. 'Have you not forgotten something?' he asked impatiently.

'Forgotten?' I repeated stupidly.

'Have you not a letter for the Queen?' he said, with a touch of asperity.

'Oh yes, of course.' I drew the letter hastily from my pocket. 'It was given me on my way to the palace by a man who begged that I would deliver it into your Majesty's own hands.'

The Queen took it from me carelessly and threw it on the writing-table. 'I will look at it presently.'

'He urged its importance,' observed the Prince. There was a curious look in his eyes which did not escape the Queen.

'How did you know that?' she asked sharply.

'The Prince was with me at the time,' I put in.

'Ah,' said the Queen scornfully; 'no doubt, then, the Prince is already informed of its contents.'

The remark was insultingly spoken, and I was not surprised to see the Prince bite his lips.

'You are mistaken,' he said quietly, shrugging his shoulders deprecatingly; 'but in these times of stress it is unwise to delay reading any communication which may contain tidings of import.'

The Queen picked up the letter with a quick movement and tore it open almost contemptuously.

'This is my cousin Ulric's writing.' She looked over the open page suspiciously at the Prince. 'But it is not addressed to me.'

The Prince eyed her steadily. She sat down, and, pressing her lips together, began to read. I watched her face, and I saw the blood ebb slowly from her cheeks. Before the page was turned she seemed to have aged ten years.

She rose quietly and put the letter into a drawer in her writing-table, which she locked. Then she turned calmly to the ambassador.

'Oh Prince,' she said, 'as a master of artifice, how can I but admire you? You have tried persuasions, reproaches, arguments, entreaties, to prevent my betrothal with my cousin; and now—now you bring me proof of his guilt—proof that would send him to his death, if—I desired it.'

'Your Majesty gives me credit to which I am not entitled. I am in the dark as to the purport of the letter.'

The Queen laughed contemptuously.

'I wondered at your anxiety that I should read this letter,' she said. 'I wonder no more.'

The Prince stood silent for a moment.

'Suppose I were to admit that I was the means whereby this letter was intercepted in its course, should I not have proved my right to a claim on your Majesty's gratitude?'

The Queen looked at him quickly, and then away; for some time she stood in thought. At last she threw up her arms with a weary gesture.

'Who can say? Who knows? Wherever I turn I seem to be met by intrigue. There seems no honesty of purpose left in the world.'

The Prince came a step closer.

'Am I not right in saying that this letter reveals a dangerous conspiracy against your sovereignty, of which your cousin is at the head? So much I gather from what you have said.'

The Queen's head had fallen forward on her bosom. There was a look of dejection, of wretchedness, about her attitude.

'I do not doubt you know already,' she said in a voice hardly above a whisper, 'that this letter is from Ulric to Herr Friedmann'—

'Friedmann, the Mayor?'

'Yes.'

'Pray go on.'

The Queen looked up at the inscrutable face before her with a wan smile.

'Must we play this dreary drama to the very end? You are aware of the contents of this letter.'

This time her assertion brought no denial from the lips of the Prince. He went a little closer and touched her arm.

'Will you plight yourself to a man whom you know is conspiring against you?'

The Queen stood silent, her lips pressed tightly together.

'And what if he is?' she said at length, almost defiantly. 'Has he not the right? I am the Queen of Herzoglia, but none knows better than I that if he and I had to plead before a just tribunal for the crown of Herzoglia, the award would not be to me.'

'He has sworn loyalty to your Majesty.'

'What man can swear away his birthright? No, Prince; you have launched your thunderbolt, and your victim stands unseathed.'

They seemed again to have forgotten my presence, and I too forgot I was an intruder.

'You mean,' said the Prince—and I wondered if his eyebrows would ever regain their normal altitude—'that you will persist in espousing the Count Ulric?'

'Why not?' asked the Queen.

'He has plotted against you. Even at this moment he is seeking to overthrow your throne. What woman of spirit could forgive this?'

'What will not love do?' There was a quaint tone of wonderment in the Queen's voice. She looked at the ambassador, with a half-smile on her face.

'You forgive him?'

'I—forgive him.'

She turned aside and stood pondering, her hand upon her heart.

Slavoski stood silent for some time. I thought there was astonishment on his face that his calculations, which he had deemed based on a certainty, should have proved erroneous. When he spoke again it was in a high-pitched voice that quivered with rage.

'Take care,' he cried, 'take care! You are exposing yourself to a rebuff. The Count Ulric would not marry you—no, not if you were the only woman in the world.'

The Queen turned to him half-wonderingly. Then I saw the scarlet surge over her face and neck.

'You insult me!' she said. 'How dare you'—

The Prince became calm and cold again.

'I do not insult you,' he said quietly; 'but it is my duty to warn you.'

'How dare you'—she began again, stamping her foot, and her eyes glowing with almost animal rage. The Prince held up his hand.

'Listen, Madame. My desire is to save you from the cruellest insult that can be paid to a woman—to be jilted by the man she loves.'

She clutched at her breast as if she would have torn to rags the lace that shrouded her bosom.

'Yes, Madame,' the Prince went on calmly, 'the time has come for plain speaking; and never forget I speak in your interest. It has been my duty to keep a watchful eye on the Count, and little he has said or done during recent months has escaped my vigilance. Many a time, to my certain knowledge, he has used words concerning your Majesty which I dare not repeat. Many a time has he complained bitterly to his companions of what he calls your Majesty's persistence in pressing unacceptable suggestions.'

The Queen uttered a half-articulate cry, and the agony and shame of it went to my heart.

'It is a lie!' she cried. 'It is not true. How dare you'—

'Yes, Madame, it is true, as I may be able to prove to you before the evening is at an end. But I fear I have pained you, which is far indeed from my wish. I will not longer detain you.'

He bowed and retreated towards the door. The Queen stood for a moment, the prey to conflicting emotions which seemed to tear her bosom, and then she followed him and laid her hand on his wrist.

'You have proved nothing,' she said hoarsely. 'Without proof I will not believe. Why should I take your word? I believe Ulric is faithful to me; he has promised'—

'I will not ask you to accept anything without proof.'

'Why should I take your word?' she repeated. 'I know he is true to me. I know it! I know it!'

The Prince bent his keen eyes on hers.

'If I prove,' he said in a low voice, 'that he has never intended to carry out his promise, that he has merely played with you, what then?'

'If you prove that,' she gasped, 'then—then'—

'His life is in your hands,' said the Prince almost inaudibly.

The Queen raised her eyes slowly to his, and for a moment they stood silent. Then the Prince bowed again and left the room, and I followed him. I glanced back at the door. The Queen had sunk back upon a chair; her fingers were moving convulsively, and in her eyes there was a look that made me shiver.

I followed the Prince in silence through the anteroom. As we entered the ballroom he grasped my arm.

'Let me advise you to be silent as to what you

have witnessed,' he said. 'Come, I will hand you over to your uncle.'

As we threaded our way through the assembled throng my eye fell on a familiar face. It was my friend the corporal. His glance encountered mine. He did not seem to notice my companion, for he greeted me boisterously.

'We meet again,' he said. 'This is an unexpected pleasure.'

Slavoski stopped abruptly; there was almost a droll expression on his face.

'You are already acquainted with the Count,' he asked, smiling unpleasantly. 'Curiously, I had guessed it.'

'We met in London,' I replied hastily.

'In London? But I understand the Count has never visited your city of fogs.'

'It was in Vienna that we met, was it not?' asked my recent acquaintance innocently.

'Of course, of course,' I muttered hastily.

For the first time I noticed that on his arm was the lady whom the Prince had identified as the Princess Kata. I saw Slavoski's eye encounter hers; I saw her blanch under his gaze. She tugged at her escort's arm, and he, nodding with a slightly disconcerted air to the Prince, passed on and was lost in the crowd. Over Slavoski's face an expression of triumph had dawned.

'Thank you, *mon ami*,' he whispered to me; 'you have given me the trump card.'

'What do you mean?' I asked angrily.

He was smiling broadly. His eyebrows had sprung to the heights again.

'Your friend the corporal is my friend the Count Ulric of Lapsburg.'

'You are making a foolish mistake,' I cried furiously; 'that is not the corporal.'

'Is it not?' he answered, showing his teeth.

'But we shall soon see.' He bowed ironically. 'I must leave you to find your uncle unaided, for I have pressing business elsewhere.'

Half-dazed, I watched him make his way from the room. What would happen now? He had guessed the truth, and it would not be a difficult task for a man of his resources to verify his suspicions. I turned hastily, looking in vain for the Count.

As I stood there in the centre of the ballroom, peering through the dancers for the sight of the couple who had just left me, I felt as uncomfortable as it is possible for a man to feel. The Count was betrothed to the Queen, and the formal announcement was to be made that night. He was, in fact, married to the Princess Kata, and Prince Slavoski, whose one object was to prevent the betrothal and to crush the Lapsburg faction, was in possession of the secret. Nor was that all. The Queen, whose jealous anger I had just witnessed, was in possession of evidence of the Count's complicity in a conspiracy, which, in her own words, was sufficient to send him to death.

And the thing that stung me more than all,

that made the cold perspiration bedew my brow, was that it was I who had set in train the series of discoveries that seemed likely to engulf the Count.

As I wandered about miserably, seeking him, he came up to me.

'How came you here?' he asked abruptly. 'I thought we had parted for good on the Lapsburg road.'

'I happen to be Lord Carton's nephew,' I answered. 'But what does a corporal on the floor of the Queen's ballroom?'

'Ah,' he answered, 'that was the curé's invention.'

'I would to God he had told the truth.'

'What do you mean?' he asked quickly.

'I mean that I believed what he said, and, thinking it was an amusing episode, I retailed it casually to Slavoski.'

'But he cannot know that I'—

'He has guessed. He is the devil.'

The colour increased in his face.

'How could he have guessed?' he asked furiously. Then he turned on me with flashing eyes. 'It is to your meddling that we are indebted for this.'

'I have not told you all,' I went on, a trifle brokenly. 'The Queen holds in her hands a letter of yours which proves your complicity in some conspiracy—a letter from you to the Mayor Friedmann.'

He stared at me, with consternation gathering on his face.

'How in Heaven's name could she have got that?'

'I handed it to her. It was given to me by a man in the street.'

He looked at me vacantly. 'You seem my bad genius,' he said dolefully. 'But what happened?'

'The Queen forgave'—

'Oh.'

'Because she loved you.'

He was silent.

'But now! When she hears you are married!'

He looked up and laughed.

'I have come to the end of my tether, I fear; and you, O worthy Englishman! have shortened the rope.'

'I am sorry.'

'An apology is, of course, welcome,' he replied, laughingly; 'but advice would be even more acceptable. What am I to do? Does the Queen know I am married?'

'Not yet; at least, not a moment ago.'

'Probably Slavoski has gone to her, and I will go too, and throw myself on her mercy. Poor Kata!'

'Go at once, then. There is not a moment to be lost.'

'I must see Kata first,' he said.

'You will be too late unless you go at once,' I urged. He shook his head.

'I have promised this dance to Kata,' he said stubbornly, 'and she will think me neglectful if

I omit it. A few minutes can't make any difference.'

I made a gesture of impatience, but he turned away, and the circle of dancers shut him from me.

MOULDING MARBLE BY PRESSURE.



EXPERIMENTS of a remarkable character, and which have awakened great interest on the part of scientists, especially geologists, have recently been conducted at McGill University, Montreal, by Professors Adams and Nicholson, of that institution. They have demonstrated that, under certain conditions, a hard and brittle substance like marble may be moulded with considerable ease by submitting it to pressure alone.

When the experiments were commenced, the object of those undertaking them was to ascertain if it were possible, by subjecting rocks artificially to pressure under the conditions that obtain in the deeper parts of the earth's crust, to produce in them the deformation and cataclystic structures exhibited by the folded rocks of the interior of mountain ranges and the older formations of the earth. They took into consideration the three factors that combined to bring about the conditions to which rocks are subjected in the lower portions of the globe's exterior covering—great pressure from every direction, high temperatures, and the action of percolating waters.

In the experiments so far conducted it has been attempted to reproduce only the first of these conditions. The substance operated with has been chiefly pure Carrara marble, and the process followed may thus be described: Columns of the marble, two centimetres and two and a half centimetres in diameter, and four centimetres in length, are very accurately turned and polished. Heavy wrought-iron tubes are made by rolling long strips of Swedish iron around a bar of soft wrought-iron, and welding the strips to the bar as they are wrapped round it. The core of soft iron is then drilled out, leaving a tube of welded Swedish iron six millimetres thick, and so constructed that the fibres of the metal run round the tube instead of being parallel to its length. This tube is very accurately fitted on to a column of marble, the process being accomplished by giving a very slight taper to both the column and the interior of the tube, so that the former will only pass about half-way into the latter. When the tube is expanded by heat, however, the marble passes completely into it, and fills it with the exception of about three centimetres, which are left free at each end. When the tube has cooled, perfect contact between it and its contents has been obtained, and it is no longer possible to withdraw the latter. An accurately fitting sliding

steel plug is inserted in either end of the iron sheath, and by means of these the marble is submitted to a pressure far above that which would be sufficient to crush it if it were not so enclosed.

The average pressure employed in moulding marble is 80,000 lb. to the square inch, and the machine by which this enormous power is obtained is so constructed that its force can be continuously maintained for weeks, or even months, if required. Under the pressure, which is applied gradually, and in some cases prolonged for several weeks, the tube slowly bulges, until a very marked enlargement of that portion which surrounds the marble takes place. It is then cut longitudinally, by means of a milling-machine, along two lines opposite to one another; but so firmly does the compressed marble hold the cut portions together that they have to be wrenched apart with a wedge.

This squeezed marble differs somewhat from the original. It is not quite so hard, though still firm and compact, especially when its deformation has been carried out very slowly; and it is of a dead white colour, the glistening cleavage faces of calcite being no longer visible. As to its strength, no accurate measurements have yet been made; but it will withstand a very sharp blow. Fragments of it, weighing ten grammes, have been allowed to fall a distance of eight feet on to a wooden platform, from which they rebounded without breaking.

The experiments thus far conducted prove beyond the shadow of doubt that marble, when subjected to long-continued and enormous pressure, may, without increase of temperature or the aid of any other agency, be vastly altered in size, shape, and appearance, and yet remain as solid as it was before the change in form took place. The fact that in one of the experiments the column of marble was reduced from forty to twenty-one millimetres in height will serve to convey some sort of idea of the enormous pressure employed in obtaining these remarkable results.

From the geologist's point of view, the interest in the proof of the plasticity of marble rests on the light that the experiments throw upon certain formations of the earth's crust. They clearly demonstrate that, under the conditions of pressure existing far beneath our feet, stones may be moulded into new shapes without being melted. Indeed, the deformed marble produced at McGill University presents, when examined under the microscope, many striking resemblances to rocks that have been squeezed, or folded, in the depths

far below the earth's surface. The experiments show that, however brittle a rock may seem to be, it is in reality a plastic substance, capable of being moulded into new shapes as surely, if not as readily, as 'clay in the hands of the potter.'

As previously stated, Professors Adams and Nicholson have hitherto attempted to reproduce one only of the conditions to which rocks are subjected in the deeper parts of the globe's crust—namely, great pressure from every direction. It is their intention, however, to reproduce more accurately, if possible, the deformation and cataclystic structures of the interior of the earth; and for this purpose they have invented an apparatus capable of generating great heat. With

it they purpose to surround the iron tube, and, by means of steam and heat, obtain those conditions which prevail at considerable depths underground. Geologists have shown that stone formations become plastic in proportion to the distance at which they are found beneath the earth's surface, the different degrees of plasticity being due to the fact that those substances lying at the lower depths are subjected to far greater heat and moisture than those at higher levels. Professors Adams and Nicholson are confident that, with their new contrivance, they can reproduce the conditions which obtain far underground; and they await with confidence the results of their futuro experiments.

AN AMATEUR PROFESSIONAL.

A CRICKETING STORY.

I.

LONGLEY,' said Smithers, coming up to me one fine Thursday evening in June, as I stood on the Eastern-shire County Cricket Ground idly watching some of our fellows practising at the nets, 'that wretched fellow Greene has put me in a hole.'

'How so, my worthy captain?' I inquired politely.

'He has had to go up to London to help the police track some swindling company-promoter who employed him as office-boy three years ago—before he deserted finance for cricket. I believe he was the unconscious vendor of several bubble concerns at that time, but he won't give me details. However, all I care about is that it's now impossible for him to keep his promise to go down to Delbury to play in that local match I told you of.'

'The semi-political affair?'

'Yes. It's a horrid nuisance. Colonel Minton is one of my oldest friends, and I'm awfully sorry to have to disappoint him. He has been relying on Greene's help, and in a letter I had from him this morning he says he believes the match will decide the election. They're simply mad about cricket in Willowshire, you know; and—so the Colonel thinks, at least—success at the wickets will mean ditto at the poll.'

'The opposition candidate's captaining the other team, isn't he?'

'Yes; that's what makes the position so acute.'

'Can't you send some other professional down?'

'Unfortunately, no. They've all got engagements for Saturday.'

'Then I'll tell you what, Smithers. If you like I'll take Greene's place. Of course a budding amateur won't be much of a substitute for a famous pro., but I suppose the majority of the players will be chawbacons, won't they?'

'Sure to be.'

'Very well, then; say the word and I'll go.'

'My dear fellow, you will place me under a great obligation.'

'Not a bit of it. I shall enjoy myself immensely, I expect. I always shine when the bowling's weak. When must I start?'

'To-morrow. The Colonel had arranged to put Greene up for the night, and of course he'll show similar hospitality to you. If you can manage to get away by the midday train, you'll arrive just about dinner-time. I'll wire Minton accordingly.'

'Right. You'd better mention that I'm only a duffer, though.'

Smithers laughed. 'I shan't do that,' he protested. 'I've some regard for truth, even by telegraph. Still, I hope you'll be in your best form, Longley, for, between ourselves, a good deal hangs on the Colonel's fate at the election. He has lost more money than he can afford in some foolish speculations lately, and he has been promised a decent appointment in the government if he gets returned.'

'You may rely upon me,' I rejoined; and shortly afterwards we parted.

II.

When, after a slow cross-country journey, I alighted from the train at Delbury on the following afternoon, a tall, well-set-up gentleman of about fifty years of age immediately approached me, and remarked pleasantly as he glanced at my cricket-bag:

'Mr Clifford Longley, if I'm not mistaken?'

'Yes,' I said; 'and you doubtless are Colonel Minton?'

'That is so,' he assented, and, holding out his hand, held mine for a moment in a friendly clasp.

'I had a wire from Mr Smithers saying you were coming by this train,' he went on. 'It is most kind of you—most kind—to throw yourself into the breach caused by the defection of your professional colleague.—This way,' he added breezily. 'I've got a dog-cart here; my place is some little distance off, and I have plenty to say to you as we drive along.'

We left the station together, and when I had taken a seat by my host's side he caught up the reins, and we started off at a quick trot.

'Mr Longley,' he observed after a little indifferent conversation, 'I've a further favour to ask of you—rather a strange one, I fear, but I trust when I've explained myself you won't feel affronted. You know, of course, that I'm one of the parliamentary candidates for this division of Willowshire?'

'Yes.'

'And that I am opposed by a Mr Rupert Gulliver, a well-known London financier?'

'So I understand.'

'Well, sir, this fellow Gulliver is pressing me hard. The majority for my party was only fifty-nine at the last election, and every vote is consequently of the utmost importance. This is a democratic constituency, and, to speak frankly, it is impossible to win the fight without playing to the gallery.'

'That is a frequent necessity in politics, is it not?' I asked, laughing.

'It is indeed. But you are wondering how all this concerns you, I dare say; so I'll come to the point. I hardly like to ask it of you, but I—in short, sir, do you mind keeping your precise identity a secret while you are down here?'

'I'm afraid I don't quite grasp your meaning. I'll oblige you in any way in my power, though.'

'Thank you; I'll make myself clear. The people of this locality have been informed that Alfred Greene, the distinguished young professional, is to play in to-morrow's match, and they are not aware of any change in this arrangement. I am very anxious they should be left in ignorance.'

'Oh, so you want me——?'

'To impersonate your colleague. Just so. Will you?'

'But don't you think, Colonel Minton, the deception may be discovered?'

'No fear of that. The match, recollect, is ostensibly just a friendly knock-up between the two small towns of Delbury and Blankney, and though all the players are enthusiasts, they have none of them, except, of course, Gulliver and myself, had opportunities of witnessing first-class cricket. So they have never seen either you or Greene.'

'But Gulliver?'

'I have found out that he cares nothing about cricket. In fact, he simply threw himself into this affair in the hope of making political capital by identifying himself with the Blankney team, which is much the stronger of the two. As a counter-

move I stipulated that our side should be allowed the help of a professional, and I am told the Blankneyites have been much depressed since they heard that Greene was coming. I believe now we shall win. If we do, it will give me, I should say, at least twenty-five votes which would otherwise go to the enemy.'

'But,' I still objected, 'if you will look in a cricket calendar you will see that Alfred Greene is described as a "splendid all-round cricketer," Clifford Longley only as a "fair bat."'

'Never mind that,' said the Colonel heartily. 'I'm sure in a match like to-morrow's you'll be *facile princeps*.'

'Why shouldn't I play under my own name, then?'

'Why? Well, for one thing, because the idea that Greene is against them is in itself likely to demoralise our adversaries, but principally because, to tell you the truth, I want it to be noised abroad that I have accorded hospitality to a professional cricketer, entertained him at my own dinner-table, introduced him to my wife and daughter. As I have told you, this is a democratic constituency, and anything that goes to show an absence of class prejudice on my part means votes, and votes mean the election, and—and more,' he added hastily.

'Very well,' I said, recalling Smithers's words as to the unsatisfactory state of the Colonel's private affairs, 'I will do as you wish.'

'A thousand thanks,' he cried effusively. 'And now for home; there as elsewhere, please, you will maintain secrecy. My wife and daughter are not to be trusted—my daughter especially. Women, my dear sir, cannot keep their tongues from wagging; it is against nature.'

With which trite reflection he flicked the mare with his whip.

III.

'If you have brought dress-clothes,' said the Colonel when we had drawn up at the door of the modern double-fronted villa in which he resided, 'don't put them on, there's a good fellow. It wouldn't be in keeping, you know; and besides—acting on the advice of my agent—I don't wear them myself at present. I have to attend meetings in the evening—got one to-night—and to appear in evening-dress might give offence to those electors who don't possess such a luxury.—Marshall,' he added to the man-servant who had come out to us, 'take Mr—ah—Greene's bag.'

The servant obeyed, and, having dismounted from the dog-cart, we entered the house, the Colonel directing Marshall to escort me to my room, and promising to fetch me down to dinner himself in a quarter of an hour.

I was conducted to a prettily furnished bedroom on the first floor, where in due course my host sought me and led me downstairs to the dining-room, introducing me (as the other fellow) to

his wife, who was tall and dignified and looked anemic, and his daughter Stella, who was so extremely pretty that I felt my heart beat faster as I returned her rather stiff bow.

There was little conversation during dinner, but when the ladies had left the room the Colonel handed me a cigar and remarked sadly:

'I think I mentioned I'd got a meeting on. I shall have to be off to it directly. I'm going to expound my views on the subject of the "Re-adjustment of Local Taxation."'

'Ah! May I inquire what your views are on the point, Colonel?'

'You may. I have none—none whatever.'

'What will you do, then?'

'I shall do as my opponent does, Mr Gr—Longley; I shall utter platitudes. At election times they fizz like champagne; afterwards they subside like soda-water.'

'You deserve to be elected, Colonel.'

'I hope so, sir; I hope so,' he replied. Then, when we had smoked and chatted a few minutes longer, he rose from his chair and asked whether I would like a game at billiards.

'Very much; but you have no time to play now, have you?'

'Oh, I meant with my daughter. She's by no means a tyro, I can tell you. She has lived a great deal in the country, and consequently knows more about games than she does about most things. On politics, for example, she has very crude ideas—talks about consistency and so forth. Never mind that, though; come with me and I'll take you to the billiard-room. But you won't forget your rôle while I'm out, and give the conversation too academic a turn—eh?'

With this warning, the Colonel led the way to a well-equipped billiard-room, where he left me with a promise that his wife and daughter should join me ere long. I began knocking the balls about, but my thoughts were of Stella, the beautiful Stella!

She and her mother soon entered, and the elder lady, with a polite wish that we might enjoy a pleasant game, settled herself in a comfortable easy-chair at the far end of the room, and opened a volume she held in her hand. Stella and I, not without some constraint, commenced a hundred-up, but before we had scored twenty Mrs Minton had fallen asleep.

'Mother's off for an hour,' observed Stella, speaking with more animation than she had hitherto displayed. 'I—I'm so glad.'

So was I, though I refrained from saying so. 'Perhaps her book is uninteresting?' I hazarded.

'Uninteresting? Certainly not. It's *Diana of the Crossways*, by Meredith. He's a very great novelist, you know.'

'Really! And do his works often affect Mrs Minton in this way?'

'Well, yes; that is—'

'A drawback to an obscure style, is it not?'

She glanced up at me quickly, but did not pursue the subject. 'It's your break,' she said severely.

'You don't play badly,' she resumed when I had scored thirty-three and left her to negotiate a double baulk. 'Are you—when the cricket season is not on, I mean—employed anywhere as a marker?'

'A marker!' I began rather indignantly; then recollecting myself, I said smilingly, 'Ah yes, sometimes at least. How did you guess?'

'I have heard that markers can generally play well. But now, Mr Greene, I have something very serious to say to you: I want you to do me a favour.'

'Confound it! more favours,' I thought ruefully. 'Very pleased, miss' ('miss' was decidedly good), I said aloud. 'Of what nature?'

'I want you to do your best to lose to-morrow's match.'

'To lose it!' I cried, astonished. 'This is extraordinary. Your father is most anxious it should be won. You don't differ from him in politics, surely?'

'No, no,' she said. 'I care nothing for politics, but a great deal for truth, and most of all'—she lowered her voice—'for my father's honour.'

She paused. 'You are scarcely explicit,' I submitted.

'I—I cannot explain fully,' she said slowly, 'but you may trust me.'

'And yet you won't trust me?'

'I would if— But first will you do what I wish?'

'I don't suppose I can influence the result much one way or the other,' I temporised.

'Oh, but you can. Father will only be nominally captain of the Delbury team; he will consult you in everything.'

'You think it will be a case of *Ego et Rex meus* between us, do you?'

She started.

'The expression occurs in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.* I went on hastily. 'One winter, when I—I couldn't get a job as billiard-marker, I—I was taken on as a super in a theatre.' (And she had just told me she cared a great deal for truth!)

'Indeed,' she said. 'You have had a varied career. But, again, may I depend on you?'

'I wish I could see how I could serve you.'

'Are you a good batsman?'

'I'm generally considered so.'

'Then go in last. Do you bowl well?'

'Execrably.'

'Then get father to put you on right through the innings. Send along plenty of wickets when you bowl; be sure to hit your wicket when you bat.'

'Too crude,' I protested.

'You decline to help me, then?' and, despite her attempted flippancy, there was a tremulous note in her voice.

'I—I must have time to think. Remember, I am at present pledged to help your father.'

'You will help him by doing as I suggest; he—poor father—doesn't know all.'

'Neither do I. Far from it.'

'Perhaps—only perhaps, mind—I will tell you more in the morning.'

'Thank you. You may be certain I'—

'Will put that red in the top pocket; of course you will,' she laughed; and looking up, I noticed that her mother was on the point of waking.

IV.

When, with the rest of the household, I had retired to bed, I lay for hours trying to hit upon some plan whereby I could oblige Stella without breaking faith with her father. But no practicable method suggested itself, and I could only take refuge in the weak hope that the weather might prove so unfavourable as to necessitate a postponement of the match. Then I fell into a troubled sleep, and dreamt I was at the wicket hitting wickets bowled by the Colonel straight into the hands of Stella, who stood at long-off. I awoke to find the morning sun streaming in at the window, and the first object that met my gaze was a pink envelope which had been pushed underneath the bedroom door. I jumped out of bed, picked it up, and saw that it was addressed to 'Mr Greene.' Hurriedly tearing it open, I read these words:

'DEAR SIR,—Referring to our conversation of yesterday evening, I have fully considered the question of telling you more, but have come to the conclusion that to do so would not be right. I can, therefore, only appeal again to you to trust me, and assure you once more that in following the course I propose you will be acting in my father's best interests.—Yours sincerely,

'STELLA MINTON.'

'Stella Minton,' I murmured. 'What a pretty signature! What a provoking, stupid, altogether delightful girl! I wonder whether I shall see her at breakfast.'

I did, and she looked wistfully at me out of her large gray eyes, but spoke no more than civility demanded; while the Colonel, on the other hand, annoyed me with a long string of questions as to the best way to make certain of winning his confounded match.

When we had donned our flannels, however, and were about to start for the ground, Stella, taking advantage of her father's momentary absence, ran up to me in the hall, and murmuring softly, 'I shall follow you soon; I rely on you, remember,' was gone before I had time to reply.

Arrived at the field, the Colonel and I found a motley crowd awaiting us, and I was introduced as Mr Greene to at least a score of persons—Gulliver amongst others—who seemed more or less gratified at making my acquaintance. Remembering how nearly I had betrayed myself to

Stella, however, I said as little as possible, and merely met compliments on my supposed prowess with a grim smile. Not that, from one point of view, I should have regretted discovery; it would at all events have relieved me from the necessity of giving further offence to Miss Minton, for whose good opinion I already felt that no sacrifice (less than the one she wished me to make) would have been too great. To act falsely towards her father, however, simply because she had hinted vaguely that his honour was involved would be altogether unjustifiable, more especially in view of my knowledge of his straitened finances. In reality—I welcomed the thought—it would be acting falsely towards her. Some day—yes, some day—she would learn this, and judge me accordingly.

The Colonel suddenly broke in upon my meditations by saying gloomily: 'A bad omen, Greene; I've lost the toss. They're going to bat.'

'Indeed,' I said indifferently.

'Will you start the bowling?'

'As you please.'

'Come on, then. I've arranged the field, subject, of course, to any suggestion you may make.'

The match began disastrously for the Blankneyites, for two wickets fell for three in my first over. One of them was Gulliver's, which, considering that he was a heavy, bloated-looking person, was scarcely surprising.

Then, however, as the evening newspapers would remark, there was a useful stand made by two players who, as I afterwards learnt, were, like myself, members of the legal profession. Not till the score was fifty-eight did either of them give a chance, but at that point, while, it not being my over, I stood at long-on, a catch came straight into my hands. That I failed to take it was due to my having just noticed among the onlookers the muslin-clad figure of Stella, and beside her, talking eagerly, Mr Rupert Gulliver. A pang of jealousy shot through me, and—I dropped the ball.

I made up for the error by getting a wicket soon afterwards, but, on the whole, the play was much better than I had anticipated, and the Blankney innings ultimately realised the respectable total of one hundred and sixty-three.

Then came the adjournment for luncheon, and, as was perhaps inevitable, I encountered Stella.

'You did well to miss that catch,' she observed, 'but your bowling was hardly what I had expected.'

'Oh! Surely it was bad enough to please you?'

'By no means. After what you said, I was surprised it was so good. Mr Gulliver was surprised too, but for another reason.'

'Why? What did he know about it?'

'He said he had always understood you were a left-handed bowler, whereas here you were using your right hand.'

Now here was a predicament! Gulliver was correct. How on earth was I to explain the discrepancy?

'The fact is,' I said in a low tone, 'I—I'm ambidextrous.'

'Ambidextrous?'

'Yes. I—I play left-handed in county matches, and right-handed in local matches. It keeps me in form, don't you know?'

'Really? Mr Gulliver said, too, that you weren't at all like the portrait he saw of you in the *Weekly Cricketer*.'

'No,' I rejoined desperately. 'It was a—a bad likeness, and I've changed a good deal since it was taken. You'll remember the Latin saw, *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur*'—

'Changed—in three weeks?' she interrupted.

'One ages rapidly in these days,' I said weakly. Inwardly I wished Gulliver—elsewhere.

'Still,' she remarked, 'it has struck me once or twice that you are not acting openly with me, and I—I hate deception.'

It was fortunate that at this point some friends of hers came up and enabled me to beat a retreat.

I need not describe in detail the innings of the Delbury eleven. Suffice it to say that I went in first wicket down, and was still handling the willow when the last man came in. Our score was then eight behind our opponents', and with a view to retaining Stella's favour, I sincerely hoped the fate of the match would not depend on me. I was not to be gratified, however. The other fellow made a lucky snick for three; on the impulse of the moment I sent a loose ball to the boundary for four; and then we ran a bye. A ringing cheer came from our partisans among the crowd. We had tied with Blankney. It was the end of the over, and it would be for me to make the winning hit.

Stella was seated at the far end of the ground, and I trembled as I imagined that even at that distance I could detect the earnest pleading of her eyes as she looked towards me.

I placed myself in position; then with a gasp I withdrew. Coming across the ground was the man I was impersonating—Alfred Greene!

He was accompanied by a tall, sharp-featured individual, dressed in black. They walked briskly towards where I stood. I awaited them as if in a dream.

But, to my astonishment, they passed me by and walked up to Gulliver.

'This is the man,' said Greene, and the sharp-featured person immediately placed his hand on Gulliver's shoulder.

'Mr Rupert Gulliver,' he cried, 'I hold a warrant for your arrest for fraud in connection with the "South Silurian Gold Syndicate." I trust you will come with me quietly and avoid unnecessary trouble.'

So ended the match between Blankney and

Delbury—in a tie; and so ended the parliamentary candidature of Colonel Minton's opponent. Gulliver, owing to a legal quibble, eventually managed to avoid punishment; but the gentleman who was put up at the last moment to fight against the Colonel in his stead was unable to avoid an extremely handsome defeat.

As for me, I became a frequent visitor to Delbury; and when, some months later, I had managed to persuade Stella that I had only been guilty of a venial offence in deceiving her, and that I was in every way worthy to become her husband, I asked her once more why it was she had made such a strange request regarding the match. This time she enlightened me.

'It was because,' she said, 'Mr Gulliver had told me that if that match were won by my father's side he would be forced to make public a forgotten but most dishonourable action on father's part.'

'And that was?'

'When father was in parliament before, he once made a speech attacking his own party, and—and he voted with the other side.'

'Is that all?'

'All? Surely it is enough. What—this is what Mr Gulliver said—is thought of a soldier who, when the drums are beating and the colours flying, and the bugle sounding for the battle, suddenly deserts, and goes over to the enemy? And Mr Gulliver explained that a politician who is false—even temporarily—to his own party is every bit as bad. Was he not right?'

'No, Stella,' I said, drawing her to me. 'He was deceiving you—wilfully, wickedly deceiving you. The desertion of a soldier proves him to be a traitor; the desertion of a politician merely shows that he is a man animated by motives of truth, or—there is just the doubt in some cases—of expediency.'

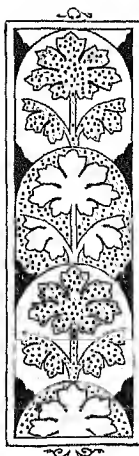
'In father's case there can be no doubt?' she submitted, with some anxiety.

'Certainly not, darling,' I answered, as I stroked her fair hair caressingly.

THE BOOKWORM.

MEN call him 'Bookworm'—and he lives alone
Within an old-time mansion, where the doors
Are seldom oped, and where the polished floors
Resound with footsteps rarely, save his own.
One room he loves: and there his years have grown
To winter 'mong his books; and there he pores
Upon those thoughtful friends, who yield their stores,
And ask no questions of a time long flown.
But when the night comes down, and lamps are trimmed
And curtains drawn, he leaves his books and pen,
And seeks the hearth, where o'er a tarnished-rimmed
And faded picture lonely hangs; and then
He sits and smokes; and, through the air blue-dimmed,
He sees and lives his summer o'er again.

J. J. BELL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

CULROSS.

By JOHN GEDDIE, Author of *The Fringes of Fife*, &c.



CURLED away in the warmest nook of the shores of Fife is an ancient little royal burgh which figures on the maps as Culross, but to its neighbours and familiars is known as 'Coo'ross.' Steep-terraced braces, well clad with wood, fence it in on the land side from the assaults of the angrier winds; and the very sea visits in gentler mood than elsewhere the curve of its beautiful bay. By these placid waters, at the foot of its sunny slope, Culross seems to have dozed off into a dream. A stranger wandering into the maze of its steep and winding 'causeys' might rub his eyes and wonder whether he had not stumbled into a Scottish 'Sleepy Hollow.' In the aspect of these narrow cobble-stoned streets and venerable dwellings there is less to remind him of the end of the nineteenth than of the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was then that Culross came to its full growth; since, it has stood still or has 'crined' away. Perhaps a Culrossian of those palmy times would wonder more at the change that has come over the place than does the modern that so little has changed in three centuries. The old industries on which the burgh thrrove have taken flight, either to newer centres or off the face of the earth. The streets once 'dirled like a Cooross girle' to the cheery ring of hammer on anvil from its sixteen smithies; now the hand-made girdle itself is fast becoming, like Culross, a piece of antiquity.

More than a hundred sail of vessels, it is said, were wont once on a time to crowd the bay, waiting to load coal or salt. The town had fifty salt-pans at work. There were other thriving industries in the old burgh—shoemaking and gardening among them. Cooross brogues and Cooross leeks were almost as well known as Cooross girdles or the Cooross salt-pans and coal-heughs. But trade has well-nigh deserted town and bay for many a year. The germ of more than one great modern invention first sprang to notice in this quiet nook by the Forth. Culross has planted, in such matters

as the mining of coal under the sea-bottom and the illuminating power of coal-gas, but others have reaped. It has fallen out of the track of progress, whether by water or land. The railway has passed it by, keeping the high ground well in rear; it is two or three miles' walk uphill to the nearest station. So, too, the lines of traffic by sea have left it on one side; only at certain tides can steamers venture into the shallow bay as far as Culross pier, which, after all, is little more than a 'rickle of stones' rising at low-water out of a dismal expanse of mud.

Then, the town is 'on the way to nowhere.' Those who go to Culross go 'aince errand' to see it; and having gone once, they are pretty sure to return again and again. There is an air of quaint seclusion about the place that is restful and soothing, especially to the eyes and thoughts of those who go thither out of the bustle of modern town-life. Here is a little eddy where some of the forms and fashions of an older society, which elsewhere have been swept out of sight and mind, have survived and make their slow and quiet round affected but little by the scour and rush of the 'struggle for existence' outside. Something of the spirit, as well as of the domestic architecture, of the days when James VI. was king, and did not disdain to taste of the burgh's hospitality and mark its growing trade, must surely linger around the Cross and beside the 'causeys' of Culross. The inhabitants, like the houses, have leisure and opportunity each to develop an individuality of his own, instead of having character and features rubbed down to a common likeness, as in the younger places which have outstripped the old town in the race.

Even in matters municipal or political Culross has until the other day suffered, or enjoyed, a curious isolation. Although by history and situation attached to the west of Fife, the parish and burgh, before the Boundary Commission took the anomaly in hand, formed a sporadic fragment of the great shire of Perth—'Perth upon Forth.' It

was a mark upon the map that Culross dwelt alone; that it had an age and character of its own that distinguished it even from the long and ancient line of its neighbours, the quaint coast burghs of Fife. But not only have its frontiers been rectified; Culross is threatened with the invasion of that fellest of all the agents of change, the railway. There is a bill in the present session of parliament, and about to become law, which will draw a line from the main system of north and south traffic into the heart of Old Culross—a dividing-line, as is feared as well as hoped by many, in the fortunes and history of the place. The scar of a railway-cutting will disfigure those verdant slopes and hanging woods of Torry and High Valleyfield which dwellers by the bay of Culross have fondly likened to the surroundings of the 'Cornice Road' at Nice. A huge cantle will be cut from the gardens and orchards of gray old houses in Newmills and Low Valleyfield, once the young and successful rivals in trade of their neighbour Culross. Along the shore, within the burgh bounds, over the grassy flat of the 'Pow' which once served the town as a harbour, and over the spot where St Thenew must have landed from her crazy shallop to bear St Mungo and to begin Culross history, will rise a railway embankment, shutting out the view of the bay and of Preston Island and the opposite shore of Lothian from the road. The station will be planted where now stands the 'Fishing Cottage' and its pond—itself the site of the 'bucket-pat' of one of Culross's old salt-pans—raised by Sir Robert Preston, the friend of Pitt, as 'a memorial of the symposia at Dagenham Reach,' where he was wont to hold what has since become one of our political institutions known as the Ministerial Whitebait Dinner at Greenwich.

This is but the beginning of the removal of old landmarks which the coming of the railway to Culross must necessarily bring about, as the line is carried along the sea-front of the town, by the Sand Haven, the West Green, and the Playfield, and under the Hanging Gardens, round the rocky bluffs, and below the plumed and towered height of Dunimarle towards Kincardine. No doubt the intrusion is inevitable, and in many ways will be beneficial. It should bring back some traffic and movement to the deserted streets. Culross will become more known and frequented as a seaside resort and as a museum of the Scottish house architecture of other centuries; it is promised, also, an 'esplanade' and other modern amenities hitherto beyond its reach and thought. But lovers of the old town will not regard the coming revolution without a feeling of wistful regret; the New Culross will never be to them as the Culross they have known.

Let us hope that Time, even with the railway as the instrument of his changes, will continue to deal tenderly with the place. It is not every burgh even in Fife that can boast, and produce memorials, of fourteen centuries of history. Better

vantage-ground for looking down this long vista of years than the shore-level, where the new line is to break its way through what were once the East and West Ports of the town, is the approach to Culross from the north. This North or Abbey Gate was probably where now stands the Chapel Barn, on the road from East Grange Station; and a little farther on, at the brow of the slope, where the steep causeway runs down and spreads among the houses of the burgh, one comes to the gray tower of the Abbey Church. Only fragments remain of the cloisters and other monastic buildings belonging to the Cistercian Abbey which Malcolm Earl of Fife founded here in 1217—enough, however, to show that they possessed beauty of architecture as well as beauty of situation. The nave of the church has almost wholly disappeared; but the massive central tower, crowned with modern pinnacles, still rears itself intact; and the choir continues to be the parish place of worship. From the summit of the tower, or from the platform surmounting the groined cloister vaults, in the manse garden, a glorious prospect of land and water is unfolded. The burgh huddled below is revealed only in glimpses of red roofs and quaint gable-ends. The Abbey Gardens, still well planted with orchard trees, diversified here and there with the thick plumage of the plane or the dark silhouette of a cedar, are spread over the spacious brae-side. Crowning the slope, and ranked alongside the church, the stately façade of the mansion or 'palace' of Culross Abbey appears through the trees. It is nearly three centuries since the first Lord Kinloss, Master of the Rolls to the 'wisest fool in Christendom,' reared this fragment of a great design; but it looks almost of yesterday beside its neighbour, the Norman tower.

Tower and braes hang half-protectingly, half-threateningly, over Culross. Throughout the greater part of its history the burgh has been thus dominated by the church. At the founding of the Abbey—even at the reputed date of the battle fought hard by between King Duncan's host and the Danes, we are but half-way to the beginning of Culross annals. Down near the shore the foundations of St Mungo's Chapel, built by that Archbishop Blackadder who was a pupil of Dunbar, and who raised the Blackadder Crypt at Glasgow, remain to remind us of the story of the miraculous birth by the water-side of Glasgow's patron saint. No doubt the famous Culdee seminary and religious house, where Servanus entertained Palladius and brought up young Kentigern, stood where afterwards rose the Abbey of the White Monks. They were great in gardening, illuminating, and other crafts, were the members of the later religious fraternity. But they had their hours of relaxation, in which the townsfolk had a share; and Mr Beveridge, the historian of Culross, believes that their miracle and mystery plays were performed on the green

platform by the sea, still called the 'Playfield.' The burgh, too, had its 'gaudé-days;' and until ill-fortune and stern Presbyterian discipline had curtailed its property and sobered its spirit, it spread the street with green branches on St Serf's Day, and rode in procession, led by the 'captain-ensign' and attendant musketeers, with the burgh colours displayed, and 'busked' the Cross and the Tron with flowers, at the annual riding of the marches on Whitsun-Monday.

Mighty, too, was the power of the pulpit in Culross in Reformation, in Covenanting, and in Secession times, and notably when James Fraser of Brea or Dr John Erskine, the leader of the 'Evangelical' party in the Kirk, were ministers of the parish, or when Row or Gillespie, from the neighbouring Carnock, or Boston of Ettrick, came to preach in the Abbey Church. But in its best days Culross had its resident landed magnates, its well-to-do merchants, and its thriving guilds and crafts, whose influence balanced or supplemented that of the clergy. It was in those days—the closing years of the sixteenth and the early part of the seventeenth century—that most of the fine old private dwellings which are the characteristic glory of Culross arose around the Cross or along the 'causeys' leading to the Great and the Little Sand Haven. One is pointed out as the house where Bishop Leighton the saintly was wont to lodge; another, beside the ancient building with the flanking tower known as the 'Study,' is surmised to have been the heritage of Duncan Primrose, the worthy Culross girdlesmith, who became ancestor of the Earls of Rosebery.

But none other of the venerable edifices in which Culross is so rife is so full of character, and at the same time so battered and woebegone in aspect, as the pair that bear the name of the 'Palace' or the 'Colonel's Close.' They stand back in their courtyard as if shunning observation, and are little better than empty shells. But the older of the two, which has on it the date 1597 and the initials of the first Sir George Bruce of Carnock, has still in one of its mouldering rooms the remains of painted wall decorations and half-obliterated black-letter devices that are probably nearly three centuries old. The builder was the founder of Culross's fortunes in industries that grew and decayed long before some of the great modern centres of trade had come into being. His wonderful 'Moat,' from

which he worked the minerals lying under the bed of the Forth, brought hither, among other admirers, James VI. and the Water Poet. It was 'drowned;' and most of the stones of it left by the 'Borrowing Days storm' are said to have gone to build Leith Pier. Traces of it may still, however, be seen above low-water mark, near the pier of Culross, which, on the other side, is flanked by the 'Blue Boulder' where the town thrust out of sight those who died of the plague.

It is a curious fact that from this old Culross magnate are descended most of the present proprietors of land in the neighbourhood. After him and his son and namesake, who has a stately monument in the North Chapel of the Abbey Church, his house was occupied by the Earls of Kinecardine until they flitted to the more imposing pile of Culross Abbey, where by-and-by they were succeeded by the Cochrane, Earls of Dundonald, one of whom was the famous naval hero, who spent there an adventurous and neglected boyhood. But much more closely associated with the 'Colonel's Close' was 'Black Colonel John Erskine,' father of the great authority on Scots law, and grandfather of the eloquent divine of the same name—a pious and conscientious but somewhat peppery-tempered old soldier and laird, who is said to have dearly loved a law-plea, and who on occasion has sallied forth, literally sword in hand, to do battle for his rights against the council and bailies. Ralph Erskine tutored his sons here when the last century was young; and his cousin, the 'White Colonel John,' of Carriden, was his neighbour in the adjoining house.

We might linger long about Culross, and tell much about its old customs and old crafts and craftsmen, especially of the rise and fall of its fame in the making of girdles; of the visitors who have bent their steps thither—among them, it is known, or said, James Duke of Monmouth, Daniel Defoe, William Cobbett, Scott in his failing years, and Turner the painter; of the Tolbooth, whose picturesque bell-tower overlooks the Tron, the open space of the Sand Haven, and the harbour, with all of good or ill omen to the town that has happened within or beside it; and of a score of other memorials of the burgh and its past life written on the fronts of its ancient houses. But enough has perhaps been said to show how much it is worth a visit before the hands of time and change are laid on it more heavily.



JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

CHAPTER XLII.—OF A VOICE IN THE EVENTIDE.



OF the events of the time following there is little need to give an exact account. There was some law business to be gone through in connection with my cousin's death and the disposing of the estate, which went to an east-country laird, a Whig of the Whigs, and one like to make good and provident use of it. Then, when I would have returned to Tweeddale, I received a post from my good kinsman, Dr Gilbert Burnet, which led me first to Edinburgh, and then so far afield as London itself. For it was necessary, in the great confusion of affairs, that I should set myself right with the law, and gain reparation for my sometime forfeited lands.

So to the great city I went, posting by the main road from Edinburgh, and seeing a hundred things which were new and entertaining. I abode there most all the winter, during the months of December, January, February, and March, for there was much to do and see. My lodging was in my kinsman's house, near the village of Kensington, and there I met a great concourse of remarkable folk whose names I had heard of and have heard of since. Notably there were Master John Dryden, the excellent poet; my Lord Sandwich; and a very brisk, pleasing gentleman, one Mr Pepys of the Admiralty. Also, I had many chances of meeting with gentlemen of like degree with myself, and many entertaining diversions we had together.

But when the spring came, and there was no further need for tarrying in the south, with a light heart I set off homewards once more. I journeyed by Peterborough and York, then came northwards by the great Northumberland road, through the towns of Newcastle and Morpeth, and crossed the Cheviot Hills, which minded me much of my own glen. At Coldstream I crossed the Tweed, and rode over the Lammermoors to Edinburgh. I stayed there no longer than my duty demanded; and when all was settled, one bright spring day just after noon, set out for Barnes.

The day, I remember, was one of surprising brightness, clear, sunshiny, and soft as midsummer. There are few ways I know better than that from the capital to my home—the bare, windy moorlands for one half, and the green glens and pleasant waters for the other.

At Leadburn was the inn where I had first met my servant Nicol, my trusty comrade through so many varying fates. I drank a glass of wine at the place for no other cause than a sentimental remembrance.

When I rode through the village of Broughton, and came to the turn of the hill at Dreva, the sun was already westering. The goodly valley, all golden with evening light, lay beneath me.

Down the long winding hill-path I rode, watch-

ing the shadows flit before me and thinking strange thoughts. Fronting me over the broad belt of woodland I saw the gray towers of Dawyck and the green avenues of grass running straight to the hill. By-and-by the road took me under the trees, among the cool shades, and the smell of pine and budding leaves. There was a great crooning of wood-doves and the sighing of the tenderest breezes. Shafts of light still crept among the trunks, but the soft darkness of spring was almost at hand. My heart was filled with a great exaltation. The shadow of the past seemed to slip from me like an old garment, and I hummed as I rode: 'There's an eye that ever weeps, and a fair face will be fain, When I ride through Annan Water with my bonny bands again.'

Suddenly I stopped, for somewhere I heard a faint melody, the voice of a girl singing. 'Twas that voice I should know among ten thousand, the only one in all the world for me, which had so often spoken brave, kind words.

I stood in shadow and watched her as she came in sight, sauntering up the little green glade with a basket of spring flowers swinging on her arm. Her hat of white satin hung loose over her hair; and as she walked lightly, now in the twilight, now in a sudden shaft of the western sun, she looked fairer than aught I had ever seen.

'Oh, you have come back at last,' she cried; 'and I have looked so long for you.'

'Indeed, dear lass, I have come back, and, by God's grace, to go no more away.'

Then, leading my horse, I walked by her side down the broad path to the house. We spoke nothing, our hearts being too busy with the delights of each other's presence. The crowning stone was added to my palace of joy, and in that moment it seemed as if earth could contain no more of happiness, and that all the sorrows of the past were well worth encountering for the ecstasy of the present.

At the lawn of Dawyck I stopped and took my love's fair hands in mine.

'Marjory,' I said, 'once, many years ago, you sang me a verse and made me a promise. I cannot tell how bravely you have fulfilled it. You have endured all my hardships, and borne me company where I bade you; and now all is done with, and we are returned to peace and our own place. Now it is my turn for troth-plighting, and I give you it with all my heart. God bless you, my own dear maid.' And I repeated softly a verse of her song:

'First shall the heavens want starry light,
The seas be robbed of their waves;
The day want sun, the sun want bright,
The night want shade, and dead men graves;
The April flowers and leaf and tree,
Before I false my faith to thee.'

And I kissed her and bade farewell, with the echo still ringing in my ears, 'To thee, to thee.'

I rode through the great shadows of the wood, scarce needing to pick my path in a place my horse knew so well; for once again I was on Maisie. The stillness clung to me like a garment; and out of it, from high up on the hillside, came a bird's note, clear, tremulous, like a bell. Then the trees ceased, and I was out on the shorn, green banks, 'neath which the river gleamed and rustled. Then all of a sudden I had rounded the turn of the hill, and there before me in the dimness stood the old gray tower, which was mine, and had been my fathers' since first man tilled a field in the dale. I crossed the little bridge with a throbbing heart, and lo! there was the smell of lilac and gean-tree blossom as of old coming in great gusts from the lawn. Then all was confusion and much hurrying about, and a thousand kindly greetings. But in especial I remember Tam Todd, the placid, the imperturbable, who clung to my hand and sobbed like the veriest child, 'Oh laird, ye've been lang o' comin'!'

CHAPTER XLIII.—HOW NICOL PLENDERLEITH SOUGHT HIS FORTUNE ELSEWHERE.



NOW at last I am come to the end of my tale, and have little more to set down. It was on a very fresh, sweet May morning that Marjory and I were married in the old kirk of Lyne, which stands high on a knoll above the Lyne water, with green hills huddled around the door. There was a great concourse of people, for half the country-side dwelled on our land. Likewise, when all was done, there was the greatest feast spread in Barnes that living man had ever seen. But in a little all was over, the last guest had clambered heavily on his horse and ridden away, and we were left alone.

The evening, I remember, was one riot of golden light and rich shadow. The sweet-scented air stole into the room with promise of the fragrant out-of-doors, and together we went out to the lawn, and thence down by the trees to the brink of Tweed, and along by the great pool and the water-meadows. And as we walked together, I and my dear lady, in that soft twilight in the green world, a peace, a delight, a settled hope grew upon us, and we went in silence, speaking no word the one to the other. By-and-by we passed through the garden where the early lilies stood in white battalions, and entered the dining-hall, where hang the portraits of my folk. Then, while the light faded, the old, stately dames looked down at us from their frames with an air, as it seemed to me, all but kindly, as if they laughed to see us playing in the old comedy which they had played themselves.

I turned to her with whom I had borne so many perils.

'Dear heart,' I said, 'you are the best and fairest of them all. These old men and women lived in other times, when life was easy and little like our perplexed and difficult years. Nevertheless, the virtue of old times is the same for us, and if a man take but the world as he find it, and set himself manfully to it with good heart and brave spirit, he will find the way grow straight under his feet. Heaven bless you, dear, for now we are comrades together on the road, to cheer each other when the feet grow weary.'

On the morning of the third day from the time I have written of I was surprised at seeing my servant Nicol coming into my study with a grave face, as if he had some weighty matter to tell. Since I had come home I purposed to keep him always with me, to accompany me in sport, and see to many things on the land which none could do better than he. Now he sought an audience with a half-timid, bashful look, and when I bade him be seated he flicked his boots uneasily with his hat, and looked askance.

'I ha'e come to bid ye fareweel, sir,' at length he said slowly.

I sprang up in genuine alarm.

'What nonsense is this?' I cried. 'You know fine, Nicol, that you cannot leave me. We have been too long together.'

'I maun gang,' he repeated sadly. 'I'm loath to dae't, but there's nae help for't.'

'But what?' I cried. 'Have I not been a good friend to you, and your comrade in many perils? Is there anything I can do more for you? Tell me and I will do it.'

'Na, na, Maister John. Ye've aye been the best o' maisters. I've a'thing I could wish. Dinna think I'm no' gratefu'.'

'Then, for Heaven's sake, tell me the reason, man. I never thought you would treat me like this, Nicol.'

'Oh sir, can ye no' see?' the honest fellow cried, with tears in his eyes. 'Ye've been sae long wi' me that I thoct ye kened my natur'. Feeltin' and warstin' and roamin' about the warld are the very breath o' life to me. I see ye here settled sae braw and canty, and the auld hoose o' Barnes lookin' like itsel' again. And I thinks to mysel', "Nicol Plenderleith, lad, this is no' for you. This is no' the kind o' life that ye can lead. Ye've nae mair business here than a eraw among throstles." And the thoct mak's me dowie, for I cauna get by't. I whiles think o' mysel' bidin' quiet here and gettin' aulder and aulder, till the time passes when I'm still brisk and venture-some, and I'm left to naething but regrets. I maun be up and awa', laird—I carena whither. We're a' made different; and I was aye queer and daft, and no' like ither folk. Ye winna blame me?'

'But where would you go?' I asked.

'I kenna yet,' he said. 'But there's aye things for a man like me somewhere on the earth. I'm

thinkin' o' gaun back to the abroad, whaur there's like to be a steer for some time to come. It's the life I want, and no' guid-fortune or bad-fortune, so I carena what happens. I trust I may see ye again, Maister John, afore I dee.'

There was nothing for it but to agree, and agree I did, though with a heavy heart and many regrets. I gave him a horse to take him to Leith, and offered him a sum of money. This he would have none of, but took instead a pair of little, old pistols which had been my father's.

I never saw him again, though often I have desired it; but years after I heard of him, and that in the oddest way. I corresponded to some little extent with folk in the Low Countries, and in especial with one Master Ebenezer van Gliccken, a learned man and one of great humour in converse. It was at the time when there was much fighting between the French and the Dutch, and one morn I received a letter from this Master van Gliccken, written from some place whose name I have forgot, a rascally little Holland town in the south. He wrote of many things, of some points in Latin scholarship, of the vexatious and most unpolitic state of affairs in the land, and finally concluded with this, which I transcribe:

'Lastly, my dear Master John, I will tell you a tale which, as it concerns the glory of your countrymen, you may think worth hearing. As you know well, this poor town of ours has lately been the centre of a most bloody strife, for the French forces have assaulted it on all sides; and though, by God's grace, they have failed to take it, yet it has suffered many sore afflictions. In particular there was a fierce attack made upon the

side which fronts the river both by boat and on foot. On the last day of the siege a sally was made from the gate of the corner tower, which nevertheless was unsuccessful, our men being all but enclosed and some of the enemy succeeding in entering the gate. One man in particular—a Scot, as I have heard, Nicolo Plenderleet by name—with two others who were both slain, made his way to the battlements. The gate was shut, and to all appearance his death was certain. But they knew not the temper of their enemy, for, springing on the summit of the wall, he dared all to attack him. When the defenders pressed on he laid about him so sturdily that three fell under his sword.

'Then, when he could no longer make resistance, and bullets were pattering around him like hail, and his cheek was bleeding with a deep wound, his spirit seemed to rise the higher. For, shouting out taunts to his opponents, he broke into a song, keeping time all the while with the thrusts of his sword. Then, bowing gallantly and saluting with his blade his ring of foes, he sheathed his weapon, flung it from him, and, joining his hands above his head, dived sheer and straight into the river, and, swimming easily, reached the French lines. At the sight those of his own side cheered, and even our men, whom he had so tricked, could scarce keep from joining.

'As regards this Scot, I may mention for your satisfaction that in person he was tall and thin, with black hair and the most bronzed skin I have ever seen on a man.'

When I read this letter to Marjory her eyes were filled with tears, and for myself I could speak to no one on that day.

WHAT IS AN EDGE?

THE edge of a tool has two parts—firstly, the wedge-like slope of the blade in general; and, secondly, the slight bevel given as a finishing-touch to make the edge proper.

The one is formed by grinding, the other by sharpening on the oilstone, or setting. A blade is, in fact, nothing but a long, thin wedge or inclined plane—with this condition: that, whereas the resisting substance is generally driven up an inclined plane, the substance in this case remains stationary and the plane is driven between its particles. It is given an edge for the same reason that a ship has a sharp bow—to make the friction as small as possible.

Take the case of a knife cutting a piece of wood. In order that a small amount of pressure may force it through, two things are necessary: the slope of the blade must be gradual and its edge must be sharp. It is evident that the latter is far the more important. The bulk of the blade is employed only in splitting the wood;

it is the edge which first separates the particles, and most of the friction takes place here. The operation of cutting is simply the pushing aside the particles of the substance. These particles have a natural tendency to cling together. A blunt edge presents to them a larger face, and will have to push aside a greater number.

The cutting substance itself, also, must be strongly cohesive; otherwise its own particles would be turned aside, or, in the vulgar tongue, it would lose its edge. For this reason steel and diamond are preferable. Every one knows that in a surgical operation a sharp lancet causes the least pain; and it is evident from what we have said that it is because it produces less jarring in the resisting nerves while separating them.

Little scientific knowledge is required to be aware that the harder steel is the better it cuts. What makes steel hard is not so well known. The manufacture of tool-steel is, indeed, interesting. There is a common impression that iron and steel are the same metal, only one is

tempered. As a matter of fact they are different chemical substances. Tool-steel is a combination of iron and carbon, which can be welded and which will harden in cold water. The more carbon there is the harder the steel will be; and it might be thought that by increasing this element the steel might be made indefinitely hard. But there is a limit. To make a tool you must be able to weld the steel into shape. The more carbon is employed the less the temperature to which the whole can be raised without crumbling when welded. It has to be raised to a red-heat, and consequently only about 1.1 per cent. of carbon can be usually combined. With 2 per cent. the steel cannot be forged.

'Cementation' is the process by which steel is made. Wrought-iron bars are raised to a very high temperature, and in this condition the carbon is absorbed. This makes 'blister-steel.' From 'blister-steel,' again, 'shearing steel' is manufactured. This steel, while being of good quality, will stand no sudden shock such as chisels or axes are liable to. But most tools are of 'cast-steel,' to form which bits of blister-steel are melted in a crucible. This is then run into moulds and cast into ingots, after which the cooled metal is hammered and rolled.

There are many other kinds of steel; but it would be uninteresting to enumerate them all. There are as well many ingredients of steel besides iron and carbon, such as manganese, silicon, and nitrogen, which last is invariably present. But these are only combined in small quantities, and, except in a scientific journal, it would be unnecessary to enlarge upon this. Of course, they all influence the quality of the steel.

There are popular misconceptions on the subject of the tempering of steel. Steel is heated and then suddenly cooled in water or oil, in two quite different ways. In one case it is raised to a very high temperature; in the other, to a low one. The latter alone is 'tempering,' and alters the hardness of the steel. The same term is popularly applied to the other process, which simply makes the combination of iron and carbon a *chemical* combination, for it is not so till this is done.

On the subject of razor-edges we consulted a barber the other day, as he is the final authority on the subject. The cutler does not set a razor half as well, and charges more. 'People expect too much from their razors,' was the barber's verdict. 'They neglect the razor and only half-soap the beard, and then expect a shave which the best steel and the best barber in the world could not give.' All grit should in the first place be washed from the face (a very necessary precaution sometimes in a big city), the soaping should be carefully done, and invariably followed by rubbing with the hand, without which proper shaving is impossible. Last, but not least, the razor must be taken care of. It should naturally be kept dry, and warmed before use, if possible; and if stropped

at all, let it be done little and carefully. We say this, as it is better in nine cases out of ten to leave the stropping alone altogether, and take it to the barber's to be done when necessary. Stropping is a fine art, only gained by constant practice. It is a matter of common experience that a razor left for a while unused becomes blunt. Rust caused by the moisture in the atmosphere is quite enough to account for this. Shearers, for instance, who have to use particularly sharp instruments, never set their shears till just before using. What is not so generally known is that a razor which will not cut will become sharper sometimes by being left aside for some time. The only explanation of this is that the electrical properties of the metal in the edge become changed.

A 'wire edge' is commonly put on a tool by amateurs. The steel turns and folds back on itself. It is owing to the edge being made too long and thin, or the metal being too soft. The only cure for a wire edge is to break off the bent portion, and grind and set again.

'A knife that cuts butter when it is hot' (and under no other circumstances) we sometimes meet with. We have been going into the reasons of things, and the reason of this is easily explained. Heat expands metal, and in proportion to the amount of metal which is heated. There is more metal in the breadth of a blade than in its thickness, and the former, therefore, is expanded immensely more than the latter. In other words, the wedge-like shape is lengthened, and the tool becomes 'sharp.'

Many people have seen the following trick: A broomstick—a common or garden broomstick, as explained by the conjurer—is placed with its ends resting on two razors, their edges upwards of course. The conjurer takes another stick, strikes the broomstick in the middle, and breaks it in two. The razors do not mark the ends of the broomstick, nor are they themselves injured. The result is due to the well-known principle of 'inertia,' and has little to do with the substance of the razors. Pretty much the same could be done if the stick were lightly supported on a paper foundation, or swung in the air. The broomstick has a tendency to avoid motion of any kind when struck, and breaks. It is necessary that it be hit directly in the middle, and very sharply.

We have spoken of the electricity of an edge. The part it plays in making a tool sharp is probably considerable; but the point is, we believe, little understood, and certainly less written about. The importance of the proper sharpening of tools in carpentering can naturally hardly be exaggerated; workers in some departments of the art have told us that it is the whole secret—the work itself is easily learned. A good rough test of the sharpness of a tool—in carving, for example—is to take a piece of common deal, and cut at right angles to the grain. If in proper condition the blade will cut the wood clean, not splinter it.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER IV.

IT was nearly half-an-hour before I saw the Count again.

'I am now just off to the Queen,' he said, with an air of great virtue.

'Haven't you been yet?' I cried. 'It is useless now.'

'Kata would not let me go,' he replied. 'When Slavoski left us he went straight to Kata, and congratulated her on her marriage, of which he said you had told him. What could the poor child do in the hands of a man like Slavoski? She has admitted the whole thing.'

'You should have gone to the Queen at once,' I said. 'It was your only chance.'

He shrugged his shoulders. 'Kata was a little inclined to be hysterical, and of course I could not leave her. Poor little Kata!'

'Heaven knows what will happen,' I murmured. There was in my mind a vivid recollection of the look I had seen in the Queen's face.

'What can't be helped must be endured,' he responded lightly.

'What madness to play with a woman like Elma!' I ejaculated.

'So I have always said,' remarked the Count casually, and nodding smilingly at the same moment to an acquaintance who passed; 'but they insisted on it. They said it was necessary for the success of our plans.' He pulled at his moustache.

'Who are "they"?''

He waved his hand vaguely. 'It is useless to give names,' he said. 'I allude to the friends with whom I have been acting.'

'Did they also insist on your marrying the Princess Kata?'

He smiled readily. 'Ah, no,' he said; 'that was an interpolation of my own.'

I was not a little exasperated at his composure. He seemed to be throwing away his chances in the most unconcerned manner.

'I don't believe you appreciate the gravity of the situation,' I said sharply.

'I think I do,' he answered. 'And in proof thereof I will go at once to the Queen.'

He made a movement as if to leave me, when, at that moment, the folding-doors were flung open, and the appearance of four footmen in the royal livery betokened the approach of the Queen. The dance in progress stopped at once. The Queen, on the arm of Slavoski, followed by her maids of honour, entered, and slowly made the circuit of the ballroom. Her face was deadly pale, and her eyes seemed alive with a strange light. As she passed us her gaze rested for a moment on Ulric, who bowed profoundly. No sign of recognition passed over her face. She

swept on, bowing right and left to her guests, who fell into two lines as she passed.

She then took her place on the dais at the end of the room, and signalled that the dance should be resumed. But before it had reached its end another interruption occurred. From the outer room we heard, above the strains of the band, the clank of swords and the sound of marching feet. The dance stopped in confusion as a party of armed guards appeared in the doorway. The officer in command saluted the Queen, and then passed up the hall to where we were standing, followed by his men. The dancers fell aside with pale, frightened faces, and a feeling of general consternation reigned.

When they had come up to the Count the officer halted them.

'I am instructed to arrest you, sir, on a charge of high treason,' he said. 'I would ask you for your sword.'

'Oh, certainly,' replied the Count, with an air of absolute good-humour. He unbuckled his belt and handed the equipment to the officer.

'You will be good enough to fall in,' said the officer.

The Count placed himself between a file of men, and the officer gave the command to march. The party passed out of the hall.

There was a panic-stricken silence in the room, and I saw a lady faint. Then the Queen stood up.

'Let the dance be resumed,' she said calmly. 'I will take my part. Come, Prince, we will dance together.'

The ambassador bowed, and taking her hand, led her to the centre of the floor. The dance began again.

When at length it had dragged through its mirthless course the Queen retired to her apartments, and the assembled guests began to take a hasty departure.

As I wandered forlorn through the quickly emptying rooms I met my uncle.

'You had better go home,' he said abruptly.

'And you?'

'Oh, I must try and see the Queen, and if possible stem her folly.'

'Is there any news?'

'Nothing; except that a court-martial has been summoned for midnight in the Queen's apartments. The mischief of it is, that Ulric, being in the army, comes under military and not the civil law. The officers are nearly all under Russian influence.'

He hurried on, and I fell back with a palpitating heart. I determined to follow my uncle's advice, and I made my way to the staircase.

As I passed a little recess I heard the sounds

of a woman sobbing. I drew aside the curtain that half-concealed the opening, and beheld a woman's form huddled upon a couch. I touched her gently on the arm.

'Can I help you?' I asked.

She looked up, startled. It was the Princess Kata. I pray God I may never see again on the face of a woman the look of loathing with which she regarded me.

'You—you—spy!' she gasped.

'Don't,' I cried, with sudden anguish.

'What harm had he done you? Why did you betray him?'

'Before God, it was unintentional. If I had but known'—

She flung up her arms with a despairing gesture.

'They have taken him away, and I shall never see him again. Elma will kill him; I saw it in her eyes.'

I tried to console her, but in vain.

'Save him, save him. Save my husband,' she kept moaning.

'By God, I will do so, or die myself!' I cried aloud, for all the world like the hero of an Adelphi melodrama. I was half-distraught by her tears and my own wretchedness. The intensity of my cry made her look up.

'Promise me you will save him,' she said, her blue eyes staring up into mine; and I—the absurdity of it strikes me now—swore solemnly he should not die. What she expected me to do I do not know. What I intended to do I had not the slightest conception; but at her words I sprang out into the passage, and ran like one possessed through the empty ballroom into the Queen's antechamber. Here I found a crowd of anxious waiters. I saw my uncle in earnest conversation with a tall, pale man I knew to be the Austrian ambassador. Slavoski was also here, standing apart, a smile of conscious triumph on his thin lips. As I passed I happened to brush against him. He turned, and his eye met mine.

'Am I not a true prophet?' he said. 'I have heard no announcement of the Queen's betrothal.'

I turned away silently. My uncle beckoned me to his side.

'What are you doing here?' he asked.

'I want to see the Queen.'

'What for?'

'The Lord knows—I don't,' I replied. The absurdity of my own position forced itself on me, and I nearly choked with foolish laughter.

My uncle looked at me steadily.

'You are overstrung, my lad,' he said. 'You had better go home to bed.'

'What is happening?'

'The court-martial is sitting.' He nodded towards the Queen's rooms. 'We are waiting to hear the result.'

'What will it be?'

He shook his head gloomily. 'Slavoski seems

to have no doubt.' And, indeed, there was on his face at that moment a look of diabolic triumph.

'Does it mean?'—I began; but something in my throat checked me.

'I fear it means Ulric's death. An outraged woman is not likely to be inclined to mercy, and it is only her direct intervention that can save him. But we must hope for the best.'

I grasped my uncle's arm. 'He must not die,' I whispered. 'I shall feel I am his murderer.'

'Nonsense,' rejoined my uncle sharply. 'Don't let your brain get full of these morbid fancies.'

At that moment the doors opened and the guard came out. In the centre was Ulric, as gay and confident as ever. He nodded to my uncle as he passed through the anteroom, and then his eye fell on my face. I dare say I was looking pale and troubled, for he stopped.

'You must not fret, my friend,' he said kindly. 'No one can blame you.'

'What is the sentence?' asked my uncle. Every one stood in painful silence awaiting the answer. The officer in charge had been summoned back to the Queen's room; otherwise I doubt if any reply would have been allowed.

'To-morrow at daybreak, or, to be accurate, to-day at daybreak, I am to—die.'

He spoke lightly, but faltered at the last word. An indescribable hush fell over all in the room and every face paled.

Then Ulric turned to me.

'Will you send Father Wiemann to me? You will find him at the Jesuit College in the Goethe Strasse. Do not delay.'

'I will go at once,' I cried, thankful that he should have given me this task to perform. It seemed to seal his forgiveness.

'I suppose I must make my peace with Heaven. That is, I understand, the correct thing to do.' He looked round the room half-whimsically. 'There is not much time.'

The captain emerged from the Queen's apartment, and the word was given to march. Ulric waved his hand as he passed out of the room.

I made a movement to follow, but my uncle stopped me.

'Fetch the priest at once,' he said. 'Waste no time. Remember he dies in a few hours.'

'I know, I know,' I answered, choking with emotion. 'What awful cruelty!'

'You had better have an order for the priest's admittance.' My uncle crossed to a page who was standing by the door, and whispered to him. The latter disappeared into the Queen's room, and in a few minutes returned with the necessary order. It was brief enough—'Admit priest to Count Ulric of Lapsburg,' and then the Queen's seal. 'He is to be confined in one of the cells of the Rathhaus,' said my uncle, handing me the order.

I took it, and hastened from the anteroom, through the deserted ballroom, where the electric lights were glowing as brilliantly as ever, down

the marble staircase, where little groups of pale-faced attendants were talking together in uneasy whispers, through the massive doors, out into the cool gardens. I was without hat or overcoat, but, heedless of all, I hastened into the town. The streets were full of people, who were gaily chattering together, waiting no doubt for the termination of the royal ball. So far as I could judge in my hurried rush, the news of the dire events of the last few hours had not transpired. Many curious looks were cast on me as I hastened on, only stopping once to inquire the way to the Goethe Strasse. At last I found it, and easily enough gained the college to which I had been directed.

I hammered at the door, but for some time there was no response. At length I heard a window open, and a nightcapped head protruded from an upper story.

'What do you want? Who are you?' asked a voice.

'I must speak with Father Wiemann,' I shouted in reply.

'I am he.'

'Let me in. I must see you privately,' I shouted again.

'There is no necessity to speak so loud,' said the father in mild reproof, for indeed, whether from nervousness or from what cause I know not, I had been bellowing in a stentorian voice calculated to wake the dead.

'Hasten,' I said in a lower key. 'I come from the Count Ulric.'

The reverend father uttered an exclamation of surprise, and slammed to the window. In a few minutes I was admitted by the father, who stood shivering in the draughty passage, a lighted candle in his hand.

'Come upstairs,' he said, and led the way, I following him. He was an old man, and I noticed he walked feebly.

I blurted out my story. I sometimes wonder he was able to understand my incoherent words; but when he did, he hid his withered face in his hands and wept.

'Oh Ulric, my boy Ulric, that you should have come to this!'

I touched him on the shoulder. 'There is need of haste,' I observed.

'Yes, yes.' He looked wildly round, and seizing the first article of attire that came to hand, began hastily to dress himself.

I watched him for a few minutes. 'Surely your legs are not meant to go through that?' I remarked in wonder, after I had seen him vainly endeavouring to draw over his feet an article of dress obviously intended for another portion of his body.

'Oh no,' he agreed, after a scrutiny. 'I fear I am a little confused. My poor Ulric!' He broke down again; it was a pitiful sight to see the poor old man weeping.

'You knew him well?' I asked.

He looked up with streaming eyes. 'I brought him up. He was almost a son to me. But I must go to him! He must not die without me.'

I hesitated a moment, and then I crossed to him, and, with my hand on his shoulder, pressed him back to his seat.

'Listen,' I said. 'Why should he die at all?'

His eyes sought mine, but there was no intelligence in his look.

'What do you mean?' he asked.

'As a priest, they will let you see him alone.'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Why not change clothes with him, and so let him escape in your place?'

I saw the light of hope shining in his eyes. He thought a little. 'It is impossible,' he said at length, sadly. 'How could I pass for him?' He took off his nightcap, and the white hair tumbled about his brow. 'It is out of the question.'

I nodded quickly. 'That is obvious,' I said. 'But why should I not take your place? Disguise me in your clothes. The order for admission does not mention any name. Is it not worth trying?'

He shook his head. 'Ulric is too noble to allow another's life to be risked in his stead. What might not happen to you?'

'Nothing,' I replied impatiently. 'I am the nephew of the English ambassador. What could they do to me?'

He sat there mournfully shaking his head. 'If you are not successful, Ulric will die without the last offices of the Church.'

'We must risk something,' I replied. 'Come, help me. It is at least worth trying.'

It was not much aid he was able to give me, but at length I was dressed in clerical clothing. I glanced at myself in a glass, and drew back with a feeling of despair. My somewhat boyish face and close-cropped head looked ridiculous emerging from the sombre raiment of the priest.

'The largest hat you have,' I exclaimed. He gave me a soft felt, into which I buried my head. I wrapped a large scarf round my neck, covering up the lower part of my face.

'The rest I must leave to Providence,' I said.

'I will pray for you,' said Father Wiemann, standing regarding me with clasped hands.

'No, no,' I replied hastily. 'You have something else to do. See that a horse awaits the Count at the bridge on the Lapsburg road. He must get across the frontier to-night. Dress quickly; there is not a moment to be lost.'

With a manifest effort the poor old man pulled himself together, and began to dress himself with some degree of intelligence.

'Good-bye,' I said. 'You must hasten. All depends on you.'

'I will not fail,' he answered. 'May God prosper you.'

I went down the stairs again, and out into the street.

SOME EPIGRAMS.



PROVERB, according to Archbishop Whateley, is 'the wisdom of many and the wit of one;' and maxims have been described as 'the distilled drops of the experience of nations;' but what phrase can most effectively give a definition of an epigram? According to Dr Johnson, an epigram is 'a short poem treating only of one thing, and ending with some lively, ingenious, and natural thought;' but this is surely too cumbrous a definition. The distinguishing characteristic of an epigram is its terse conciseness. An epigram should be at once graphic and laconic, pointed and poignant: a brilliant brevity. It is a quip and a quiddity, a pun, a parody, and a paradox, a repartee, *jeu d'esprit*, and a *bon mot*. It may be gay, like the flashes of Sydney Smith; cynical, like the acidities of Talleyrand; arrowy, like the drolleries of Charles Lamb; bitter, like the acerbities of Douglas Jerrold; broad, like the humours of Butler and the two Colmans; alliterative and antithetical, like the brilliancies of Lord Beaconsfield. But an epigram must be centrifugal and concentrated: a kind of Liebig's Extract of Literature. There must be no flourishes, no embroidery; 'no flowers, by request.'

Let it be the congenial concernment of the present annotator to recall a few famous epigrams of the past, both in verse and prose. Epigrams were wont to coruscate like the facets of diamonds at the dinner-parties given by Rogers the banker, and by the beautiful Marguerite Countess of Blessington; while in French *salons* Talleyrand, Piron, Fontenelle, Rivarol, and Chamfort supplied the colloquial scintillations of wit that were as dazzling and sharp as the scimitar of the Turk who could pass his weapon through a man's neck without hurting him. The victim used to grin with delighted surprise. 'Sneeze,' said the *sabreur Turque*. The executed one did so, and his head rolled on the floor.

But the old art of talking is extinct. Our dialogue has degenerated into a series of meteorological observations. It is not of the easy give-and-take order described by Dean Swift, who explains the whole art and mystery of conversation:

Conversation, is but carving;
Give no more to every guest
Than he's able to digest;
Give him always of the prime,
And but little at a time:
Carve to all, but just enough;
Let them neither starve nor stuff;
And, that you may have your due,
Let your neighbours carve for you.'

In *Epigrams, most Elegant and Wittie*, by Sir John Haryngton, published in 1633, occurs one of the neatest of that order:

Treason doth never prosper; what's the reason?
For if it prosper, none dare call it treason.

Lord Byron thought Samuel Rogers's epigram on Ward (Lord Dudley) inimitable:

Ward has no heart, they say; but I deny it.
He *has* a heart, and gets his speeches by it.

Another Byron, Mr H. J. Byron of *Our Boys* fame, is responsible for the following military epigram:

Smart soldiers like to be well tightened in:
Loose habits would destroy all discipline.

Fontaine, the architect, who built the triumphal arch in the Carrousel in Paris, placed upon it an empty car drawn by the famous bronze horses of Venice. Talleyrand asked him, '*Qui avez vous l'intention de mettre dans le char?*' The answer was, '*L'Empereur Napoléon, comme de raison.*' Upon which Talleyrand said, '*Le char l'attend.*'

Thomas Hood came out with this loyal effusion:

Three traitors—Oxford, Francis, Bean—
Have missed their wicked aim;
And may all shots against the Queen
In futuro do the same.
For why—I mean no turn of wit,
But seriously insist,
That, if her Majesty were hit,
No one would be so missed.

Laman Blanchard showed a pretty wit in the ensuing impromptu on Maclise's portrait of Macready as 'Macbeth.'

Maclise's 'Macready's Macbeth'
As a picture defies all attacks;
Yet, uniting these three in a breath,
It is only a view of *At-macks*.

Poor Fritz in the *Grande Duchesse* acted an epigram when he took to the trade of teaching in order to learn something. Sydney Smith once said that clergymen might be divided into three classes: Nimrods, Ramrods, and Fishing-rods. It was not a bad epigram; but it has been beaten by an American, who, with special reference to the Erie Line, said that railways are built upon three gauges: Broad Gauge, Narrow Gauge, and Mortgage. The antithesis to an epigram is an euphemism which hides a disagreeable fact in a cloud of words. Here is one, also of American parentage: A man was asked the cause of his father's death, and replied that 'while addressing a large outdoor assemblage of people, who were listening to his remarks with the greatest interest, a portion of the platform upon which he was standing gave way beneath him, whereby he was precipitated several feet with such violence as to break his neck.' The man's father was hanged.

Here is a somewhat ill-natured epigram:

If a twin,
A Greek will at the breast begin
To rob his sister of her share
Of another's milk with smiling air,
And less because he finds it sweet
Than from the deep instinct to cheat.

Let us return to the witticisms of Sydney

Smith. 'The whole story of my life,' he says, 'has been passed like a razor—in hot water or a serape.' 'There is the same difference between his tongue and mine as between the minute and the hour hand; one goes twelve times as fast, and the other signifies twelve times as much.' 'My house is just now full of cousins. They are all first consins, and I wish them—once removed.' 'The Church's ordinances of feasts and fasts are tolerably well kept up. The rich keep the feasts and the poor the fasts.' 'If you masthead a sailor for not doing his duty, why should you not weathercock a parishioner for not paying his tithes?' 'Gout is the only enemy which I don't wish to have at my feet.'

The following epigrams were exchanged between James Smith and Sir George Stewart Rose on the subject of Craven Street, Strand, where the former was then residing:

James Smith.

At the top of my street the attorneys abound,
And down at the bottom the barges are found.
Fly, Honesty! fly to some safer retreat,
For there's craft in the river and craft in the street.

Sir George Rose.

Why should Honesty fly to some safer retreat,
From attorneys and barges? odd rot 'em!
For the lawyers are *just* at the top of the street,
And the barges are *just* at the bottom.

Lord Erskine fathers the following:

The French have taste in all they do,
Which we are quite without;
For Nature, that to them gave *gout*,
To us gave only gout.

Mr J. Outram, on hearing a lady praise a certain reverend doctor's eyes, exclaimed:

I cannot praise the doctor's eyes;
I never saw his glance divine.
He always shuts them when he prays,
And when he preaches he shuts mine.

Francis Fuller, *apud* Nicholls, has an ambidextrous couplet on a left-handed writing-master:

Though Nature thee of thy right hand bereft,
Right well thou writest with the hand that's left.

Mr Austin Dobson is always dainty:

You snared me, Rose, with ribbons,
Your rose-mouth made me thrall.
Brief, briefer far than Gibbon's
Was my *Decline and Fall*.

Mr Shirley Brooks puts the following in the mouth of Jenner on hearing in Elysium that complaints had been made of his having a statue in Trafalgar Square:

England, ingratitude still blots
The escutcheon of the brave and free:
I saved you many million spots,
And now you grudge one spot to me.

The following on the marriage of a Mr Lot and a Miss Salter is by Mr J. C. Young:

Because on her way she thought proper to halt,
Lot's wife, in the Scriptures, was turned into salt;
But though in her course she never did falter,
This young Lot's wife, strange to say, was Salter.

At some country house, where a dramatic piece founded on *Ivanhoe* was to be performed, Lord Alvanley was requested to play the part of Isaac of York. He declined, saying, 'I never could do a Jew in my life.' Theodore Hook was dining at Powell's one day, says H. F. Chorley in his *Life and Letters*, and the talk fell upon *feu* Jack Reeve. 'Yes,' said Hook, when they were speaking of his funeral, 'I met him in his private box going to the pit.' Once more Thomas Hood—this time on the Art Unions:

That picture-raftles will conduce to nourish
Design, or cause good colouring to flourish,
Admits of logic-chopping and wise-sawing:
But surely lotteries encourage drawing?

One from the Greek:

A viper bit a Cappadocian's hide;
But 'twas the viper, not the man, that died.

Oliver Goldsmith has the same idea in his *Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog*:

Tho' wound it seemed both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That shewed the rogues they lied;
The man recovered of the bite,
The dog it was that died.

James Smith, joint-author of the *Rejected Addresses*, contributes to our collection:

As late the Trades Unions, by way of a show,
Over Westminster Bridge strutted five in a row,
'I feel for the bridge,' whispered Dick, with a shiver;
'Thus tried by the mob it may sink in the river.'
Quoth Tom (a Crown lawyer), 'Abandon your fears;
As a bridge it can only be tried by its piers.'

Concerning Socialism, Sir William Leng paraphrases Ebenezer Elliott:

What is a Communist? One who has yearnings
For equal division of unequal earnings;
Idler, or bungler, or both, he is willing
To fork out his penny and—pocket your *shilling*.

Bushe, the Irish Chief-Baron, made this impromptu verse upon two agitators who had refused to fight duels, one on account of his affection for his wife, and the other because of his love for his daughter:

Two heroes of Erin, abhorrent of slaughter,
Improved on the Hebrew command—
One honoured his wife, and the other his daughter,
That his days might be long in the land.

James Smith again obliges us:

'To this night's masquerade,' quoth Dick,
'By pleasure I am beckoned;
And think 'twould be a pleasant trick
To go as Charles the Second.'

Tom felt for repartee athirst,
And thus to Richard said:
'You'd better go as Charles the First,
For that requires no head.'

The same author responds to our *encore* with these lines:

To Flavia's shrine two suitors run
And woo the fair at once;
A needy fortune-hunter one,
And one a wealthy dunce.
How, thus twin-courted, she'll behave
Depends upon this rule—
If she's a fool she'll wed the knave,
And if a knave the fool.

'The prospect's always fine in the prospectus!'
is the epigrammatic reflection of J. R. Planché.
Mortimer Collins is droll at the expense of
Charles Darwin in the following:

There was an Ape in the days that were earlier;
Centuries passed, and his hair became curlier:
Centuries more gave a thumb to his wrist—
Then he was a Man, and a Positivist.

A beautiful woman, who wore on her bosom a
miniature of her husband, a very ugly man,
asked Thomas Moore, the Irish poet, what he
thought of it. 'I think,' said he, 'that it is like
the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill.' Lord Brougham
defined a lawyer as 'a legal gentleman who rescues
your estate from your enemies and keeps it him-
self.' Hicks and Thackeray, walking together,
stopped opposite a doorway over which was in-
scribed in gold letters these words: 'Mutual Loan
Office.' They both seemed equally puzzled.
'What on earth can that mean?' asked Hicks.
'I don't know,' answered Thackeray, 'unless it
means that two men, who have nothing, agree to
lend it to another.' One would almost as soon
expect to see Thomas Carlyle at Cremorne Gardens
as Dr Johnson among the Epigrammists, yet the
ponderous lexicographer penned this pretty trifle:

If a man who turnips cries,
Cry not when his father dies,
'Tis a proof that he would rather
Have a turnip than a father.

Stay! Dr Johnson was, after all, not wanting in
the *vis comica*. When he had finished the work
which laid the foundation of most English dictio-
naries, he asked the man who had carried the last
sheet to Millar, the publisher, 'What did he say?'
'Sir,' said the messenger, 'he said, "Thank God, I
have done with him!"' And Ursa Major, in his
grandest style, replied, 'I am glad he thanks God
for anything.' The mention of dictionaries re-
calls a reminiscence of one of H. J. Byron's plays.
The point lies between a play upon words and an
expression of opinion. Two rival names are men-
tioned in it, both so good that the one comple-
ments the other, like two harmonious colours on
a painter's palette. The heroine of the comedy is
a bright American girl, full of fun and patriotism.
Praising her own country at the expense of the
hero (her lover, by the way), she tells him that
America has had even to undertake the task of
teaching England how to spell; *apropos* of which
she triumphantly demands: 'What do you say to
Webster?' 'Walker!' replies the Englishman.

The wedded state is a favourite subject with the
epigram-makers. From a very old ballad we take this:

There was a criminal in a cart
A-going to be hanged;
Respite to him was granted,
And oart and crowd did stand,
To know if he would marry a wife
Or rather choose to die;
'T'other's the worst—drive on the cart!'
The criminal did reply.

More modern is this verse:

I would advise a man to pause
Before he takes a wife;
In fact, I see no earthly cause
He should not pause for life.

Who, by the way, is the author who describes a
second marriage as being 'the triumph of hope
over experience'?

Samuel Lover's matrimonial epigram is very
apposite:

Though matches are all made in heaven, they say,
Yet Hymen (who mischief oft hatches)
Sometimes deals with the house 't'other side of the way,
And there they make Lucifer matches.

'Marriage,' says Selden, 'is a desperate thing.
The frogs in *Æsop* were extremely wise; they
had a great mind to some water, but they
would not leap into the well, because they
could not get out again.' 'They say a parson
invented gunpowder,' observes Douglas Jerrold;
'but one cannot believe it till one is married.'
The same lively wit tells us: 'My notion of a
wife at forty is that a man should be able to
change her, like a bank-note, for two twenties.'
Somebody told George Colman that a certain actor,
by the death of his wife, 'had suffered a loss he
would not soon be able to *make up*.' Colman
dryly said: 'To tell you the truth, I don't believe
that he has quarrelled with his loss yet.' Samuel
Foote was much bored by a pompous physician
at Bath, who told him that he thought of publish-
ing his own poems, but had so many irons in the
fire that he really didn't know what to do. 'Take
my advice, doctor,' said Foote, 'and put your
poems where your irons are.'

Garriek's happy lines on Sir John Hill in his
double faculty of physician and playwright are
well known:

For physic and farces his equal there scarce is;
His farce is a physio, his physio a farce is.

Some other wit thus supplemented the couplet:

The worst that we wish thee, for all thy vile crimes,
Is to take thine own physio and read thine own rhymes.

Nor did it end here. Malice, like echo, caught up
the perishing strain, and the last epigram was the
best of the three:

No! let the order be reversed,
Or he'll not rue his crimes;
For if he takes his physio first,
He'll never read his rhymes.

Very pungent indeed was the remark of the
old Scotchwoman who, when advised by her
minister to take snuff with her to keep her awake

in the kirk while he was preaching, replied: 'Why dinna ye put the snuff in the sermon, mon?' 'Some men preach,' said Sydney Smith, 'as if they thought sin was to be taken out of a man as Eve was taken out of Adam—by easting him into a profound slumber.' 'I wonder, Mr Spurgeon,' said an old, respected minister to the orator of the Tabernacle, 'that you allow yourself such freedom, and discredit your calling by making so many jokes in the pulpit.' 'Ah!' replied Mr Spurgeon, 'you would not wonder at all if you knew how many more I kept to myself.' The Rev. Rowland Hill said once to some people who had entered his chapel to avoid the rain: 'Many people are to be blamed for making religion a cloak; but I do not think those much better who make it an umbrella.'

A cunning choice of texts has always been a favourite device with quaint preachers. Of two rival candidates for a lectureship on trial, the one preached in the morning on '*Adam, where art thou?*' His rival, in the evening, capped the text with '*Lo! here am I,*' and his ready wit is said to have won the scholarship. The late Bishop of Worcester hated church congresses and all similar assemblies, and never allowed one to be held in his diocese. One day one of his chaplains told his lordship that he had been invited to preach at a congress, and was busy getting ready his sermon. 'What text have you chosen?' asked the bishop. 'In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom,' was the reply. 'Oh, indeed,' said my lord. 'Allow me to suggest another: "The talk of the lips tendeth to penury."'

A C O N C A G U A.



CONCAGUA is probably the highest mountain in the New World. Moreover, it stands within a hundred miles of the Pacific, from which it is often visible to those who pass in ships, and within eighty miles of the capital of Chili, the most advanced and prosperous of the South American states. There is, therefore, nothing to surprise us in the fact that two important scientific expeditions have in recent years attacked it, one German and one English. It is proposed to give a short account of each.

Dr Paul Güssfeldt's name is known to all readers of Alpine literature, and he was already familiar with the chief summits of the Alps when in the autumn of 1882 he landed at Valparaiso, accompanied by a well-known Swiss guide. Unfortunately the guide fell ill on the voyage, and soon after their arrival in Chili insisted on returning to his native land. Dr Güssfeldt recognised at once that the loss of his European companion would probably make it impossible for him to accomplish the high ascents that he had planned. Yet he determined to make the best of a bad business, compelled as he was to depend altogether on the natives for assistance, and to be his own guide in a district of which no reliable map existed.

In December and January he made expeditions in the mountains to the south-east of Santiago, crossing the Cordilleras into Argentine territory by passes of 13,000 and 11,000 feet, and returning by a route farther north by passes of 12,000 feet besides ascending the volcano of Maipo, 17,717 feet. It was in February 1883 that he set out on his chief enterprise, the ascent of Aconcagua. Crossing the western Cordillera by a pass lying to the north-north-west of the mountain and about thirty miles distant from it, he made his way up the

Valle Hermoso and established his camp at a height of 11,750 feet. Leaving this base at 4 p.m. on February 20, he was able to ride for three hours farther up the valley. Then, with two natives as companions, favoured by a brilliant moon, he first climbed a long *coulouir*, or gully, near the foot of which lay an unknown skeleton with a few tattered rags clinging round it. The *coulouir* presented no difficulty, and thus he gained the summit of the ridge at the head of the valley up which he had been travelling. A glacier two miles wide now lay before him, and beyond it the slopes of the great mountain, bare of snow for the most part, and rising at an angle of from 30° to 40° to a height of more than 6000 feet above the ground on which he was standing. The crossing of the glacier offered no serious difficulty, free as it was from snow and 'resembling a ploughed field'; indeed, during the whole expedition the travellers never had occasion to rope themselves together. At 1.50 a.m. they set foot on the mountain itself, and thenceforward the ascent was characterised by its extreme monotony. Moving slowly and with frequent halts, they followed a sort of broad ridge. Of climbing strictly speaking there was none. But the farther they advanced the greater became the difficulty of breathing, and all suffered from pains in the legs. The cold was severe—14° Fahr.—but not excessive, and the wind began to rise. At 10 a.m. one of his companions gave up, at a height of over 20,000 feet; but Dr Güssfeldt went on with the other, in ever-increasing distress, until at 12.30 they had reached a height of 21,523 feet, by boiling-point observation. Clouds now settled on the summit that seemed so near, and sleet began to fall, and very soon they were assailed by a 'tourmente,' or whirlwind of snow, the most dreaded of all dangers on high mountains. To persist would have been madness; so they descended in haste,

picking up on the way the comrade who had stayed behind, and regained their camp in the valley after an absence of thirty-one hours.

On March 3 the attempt was repeated. With the same companions and following the same route, Dr Güssfeldt crossed the great glacier above mentioned, and bivouacked among the rocks, without light or fire, at a height of 17,390 feet, all three packed into a sleeping-bag that was made to hold two. Next morning they resumed their slow and painful march; but about noon bad weather once more compelled them to retreat before they had attained so great a height as on February 21. That they should have accomplished what they did is indeed remarkable, seeing that the two Chilicños were unused to mountaineering, and that Dr Güssfeldt was suffering during his second attempt from a raging toothache, which robbed him of rest at night and made it impossible for him to take any solid food. And there can be little doubt that he would have succeeded in ascending the great mountain if he had had the moral and material support of even one European companion, such as the Swiss guide of whose services he had been so unfortunately deprived. For the scientific results of his journey, his geological and botanical collections and the careful series of observations on which his maps are based, the reader must consult his book, *Reise in den Andes von Chile und Argentinien* (Berlin, 1888). Twenty admirable photographs at the end of the book give a vivid picture of the dreary scenery of this portion of the Andes. Thus, while the aspect of the mountain as seen from the east is exceedingly grand, reminding one of the southern face of Monte Rosa, from the west it is disappointing; and the moderate angle at which its stony slopes rise, together with the remarkable absence of snow on its upper parts, make it difficult for the observer to believe that he has actually before him the loftiest summit of the Andes. This is well brought out in a paper by Mr W. E. Hall that appeared in the *Alpine Journal* in 1869. 'Looking out of my window,' he writes, 'the morning after my arrival at Valparaiso, my eye rested on a considerable peak rising conspicuously in the direction of the Andes. It had large patches of snow upon it' (this was in October, the beginning of summer), 'but, on the whole, it was rather a rock than a snow mountain; and as its contour was not precipitous, this, together with the extraordinary degree to which its details were distinctly visible, made me suppose it was some outlying buttress of the chain. It was only in the evening, when I chanced to be on board the English surveying ship *Nassau*, that I learned that I had been staring all day from ninety-five miles off at a mountain of 23,600 feet, through an air so disagreeably harsh that I was able not only to draw the outline accurately, but to mark the exact forms of snow and rock.'

Mr E. A. FitzGerald's well-equipped expedition landed at Buenos Ayres in November 1896. Besides his English companions, he had with him several Swiss porters and the famous Alpine guide, Matthias Zurbriggen, who had accompanied Sir Martin Conway in his Himalayan expedition in 1893, and had climbed the highest peaks of the New Zealand Alps with Mr FitzGerald himself in 1895. Early in December they reached Punta de las Vacas, 8000 feet above sea-level, the farthest point to which the Trans-Andean Railway had been carried, and established their base of operations for the next five months at Puente del Inca, twelve miles farther up the valley, a remarkable natural bridge that crosses the Rio de las Cuevas a short distance below its junction with the stream from the Horcones valley. An excellent idea of the scenery of these valleys and their glaciers, lying to the south of Aconcagua, can be gained from the large series of beautiful photographs reproduced in colotype in Hubel's *Ansichten aus Südamerika* (Berlin, 1897). The book also contains a good sketch-map by the author, but his work was unfortunately cut short in 1895 by the Argentine authorities, who considered further explorations inexpedient, pending the settlement of their dispute with Chili regarding the frontier.

On December 23 Mr FitzGerald and Zurbriggen, with four Swiss porters and ten mules, made their way up the Horcones valley and passed round to the west side of Aconcagua, camping at a height of 14,000 feet. On Christmas-day they camped at 18,700 feet; and next day, while exploring, Zurbriggen found Dr Güssfeldt's card in a tin box left by him at the highest point he had reached fourteen years before. Bad weather and want of supplies then forced them to descend. A second attempt, undertaken a few days later, failed from the same causes, and they went down to Puente del Inca to recruit, Zurbriggen being nearly drowned in a torrent on the way. Returning to the attack a week later, they succeeded, on January 14, 1897, in reaching the *arête*, or ridge, between the two summits. Here Mr FitzGerald was forced by severe illness to turn back, and Zurbriggen struggled on alone, reaching the top at 5 P.M. He is Italian by nationality, his home being at Macugnaga, to the south of Monte Rosa; and the Italians may well be proud of the fact that in the same year men from Italy have achieved the first ascent of two such mighty mountains as Aconcagua and Mount St. Elias in Alaska.

A month later Mr FitzGerald made his sixth gallant but unsuccessful attempt. The party camped for fourteen days at an altitude of 18,700 feet, in intense cold, with a violent gale blowing. In the London *Daily Chronicle*, in which appeared the first accounts of the expedition, Mr FitzGerald thus describes the pleasures of living at this height in the Andes: 'You pant like a dying consumptive; then the dust, which smothers every-

thing, gets into your throat and chokes you; you cough exhaustingly and pant worse than ever. Every effort, however slight, entails a fresh effort of will, and your only desire in the world is to give up the whole thing and get down. At times the view was indescribably splendid, but as a rule dust-storms blotted out the sky. Rain never falls at these heights.' Starting from this camp at 8 A.M., Mr Stuart Vines, the geologist of the expedition, and an Italian porter, gained the summit in nine hours. Owing to the violence and persistence of the wind, snow only lies in great patches on the peak. Avoiding these, they struggled up through deep masses of rotten, rocky material, slipping back two feet for every three they stepped. During the latter portion of the ascent they were forced to stop every four or five yards for two or three minutes, stooping forward to recover breath. They remained an hour on the summit, which they measured and found to be a small plateau seventy yards square. The view was magnificent, and the Pacific, one hundred miles away, resembled a vast, unruffled pond. In the afternoon, when the sun shone in the west, the ocean appeared like an immense conflagration or tract of fire. The clouds, however, only parted occasionally, and a sort of haziness prevailed throughout the day. Respiration was exceedingly difficult, and finally a gale arose, which prevented a longer stay.

On the east side the mountain falls away in a stupendous precipice of 10,000 feet, with hanging glaciers that feed a considerable glacier below. Two other glaciers occupy the heads of the glens to the south and west, which drain into the Horcones torrent, while to the north-west lies the great glacier crossed by Dr Güssfeldt.

It will be seen from what has been said that the difficulties encountered through bad weather, exposure to severe cold, and above all the dreaded 'puna,' or mountain sickness, were of no ordinary character. To these must be added, at lower levels, the dangers from mountain torrents, in fording which several of the party had narrow escapes from drowning. Add to this that they all suffered more or less from fever, and that the mountain streams were poisonous, owing to the presence of some mineral in the water which caused violent diarrhoea, while before they left the mountains in June heavy snowfalls blocked the ways and made it very difficult to carry out the survey and photographic work. For the scientific results of the expedition we must wait for the appearance of Mr FitzGerald's book, which was unfortunately delayed by the severe illness of the author. In the meantime it is interesting to note that he fixes the height of the mountain provisionally at 'a trifle over 23,000 feet.' The height assigned to Aconcagua by Dr Güssfeldt, after careful trigonometrical measurement, was 22,868 feet. This is higher by 268 feet than the Pioneer Peak, ascended by Sir Martin Conway in

1893, in the Himalayas north of Kashmir. But it would seem that what it is the fashion to call the 'record' in mountain-climbing is still held by Mr W. W. Graham, who, with the late Emil Boss of Grindelwald and a well-known Swiss guide, Ulrich Kaufmann, reached in 1883 a point within thirty feet of the summit of Kabru in the Sikkim Himalayas. It is true that attempts have been made to throw doubt on this achievement. It has been argued, on purely *a priori* grounds, that at such a height the party must have suffered more from the effects of diminished atmospheric pressure than appears from Mr Graham's account, read before the Royal Geographical Society (*Proceedings of the R.G.S.*, Aug. 1884). And, as there is no question as to the height of Kabru, which has been fixed trigonometrically by the Government Survey at 24,015 feet, it has been suggested that they were mistaken in their identification of the peak that they ascended. But the day was cloudless; Mr Graham was familiar with the country (it was his second visit to Sikkim), and he was furnished with the best maps. Moreover, in the familiar panoramic view of the range as seen from Darjeeling, Kabru is a very prominent object, easily identified, to the west of Kinchinjunga, the loftiest peak in the view. In the face of these facts, *a priori* objections of the nature stated can have little weight, especially as what is familiarly known as 'mountain sickness' is as yet imperfectly understood, but is known to be largely dependent on local causes and to affect different individuals in very different ways. The whole question has been very thoroughly dealt with by Mr Douglas Freshfield in the *Alpine Journal* for February 1898, to which readers interested in the question are referred. Mr Freshfield shows that most of the arguments which can be adduced to-day for asserting that the limit of human powers is reached at about 23,000 feet might have been equally well adduced a hundred years ago to prove that the limit lay at about 16,000 feet; and he expresses his belief that in the next century the Alpine Club will carry the limit 6000 feet higher still.

TO ITALY.

O ITALY, my country! thou endowed
With hapless gift of beauty, whence arose
The fatal heritage of endless woes
That fill thy lovely eyes with tears and cloud
Thy brow. Ah! wert thou not so fair, or proud
With ancient might to fill with dread thy foes,
Whose heart with all the spoiler's fervour glows,
Yet feels no pity for thee, spent and bowed—
Then ne'er should I behold down Alpine heights
Grim warriors pour, nor see the bloody wave
Of Po quaffed thus by steeds of Gallic knights;
Nor see thee, widowed of thy trusty glaive,
With hireling succour trust to win thy rights,
And, conquering or conquered, bide a slave.

GEO. MONREAL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

A NAVAL OFFICER'S TRIP TO SAN JOSÉ, CENTRAL AMERICA.

I'VE seen the vice-consul,' he says; 'passes have been obtained, and he has made arrangements for the first batch to go to San José to-morrow morning.'

The above words were spoken by the paymaster of H.M.S. —, stationed at Port Limon, the Atlantic port of Costa Rica in Central America.

For some weeks we had been sweltering in Limon Bay, the ship rolling continuously to the long eastern swell which sets in along the coast the greater part of the year. Consequently the prospect of a change to the capital, situated among the cool uplands, was received with great satisfaction by all the officers of the wardroom mess.

The next morning at 5.45 A.M. the first batch found themselves seated in one of the cars of the Costa Rica Railway Company—an English company, and managed by Englishmen; but before commencing the journey a few words about Port Limon may not be amiss. The town dates from the opening of the railway in the year 1892. With the exception of a few merchants and railway officials, and the Costa Rican element (consisting of the governor, police, and customs), the population of 3500 to 4000 is made up of negroes from the various West India Islands—by far the greater part from Jamaica. They are nearly all engaged on the railway or in cultivating bananas, an industry which has enormously developed during the last three years, the number of bunches exported during 1897 being about 2,000,000. About two-thirds of the population are loyal subjects of the Queen, and when one of 'de ole lady's' ships appears in the port they become very demonstrative and assume a proprietary right in all that appertains to it, and are rather given to crow over the foreign negro in consequence. One thing they hold as an article of faith—that if any man's hand is against them, 'de man-o'-war buckra' will see them through.

No. 35.—VOL. I.

Just as the train was about to start, our genial friend, Vice-consul Lindo, got on board, he having kindly offered to accompany us as guide, philosopher, and friend; and, from his intimate knowledge of the country, very useful we found him, both on the journey and afterwards in the capital. The route for the first twelve miles runs along the coast in a north-westerly direction to Swampmouth. Following the track, the banana plantations approach to within a few feet on either side of it, but they rarely go more than a quarter of a mile or so into the interior, which is a dense tropical jungle teeming with animal and bird life.

At intervals along the line huge piles of hard green bananas are waiting for the banana train to run them into Port Limon, and from thence, by means of fast steamers, they will reach New York in about six days, ripe and ready for use.

Leaving the coast at Swampmouth and branching off nearly due west into the interior, we cross the Matina River (a sluggish, brown, muddy-looking stream), and find ourselves in Matina, a long, straggling village of wooden huts built on piles, and situated on the edge of a swamp. Matina is not a place in which the white man loves to linger; but he whose business avocations call him there must carry his quinine as a smoker does his match-box if he would make a good stand against the malarial fiend. The place does not, however, appear to have a very depressing effect on 'Quashce,' nor, judging by the number of woolly-headed urchins about, does it interfere with the wonderful prolificness which is one of his chief characteristics.

The conditions of the climate and soil of Matina are most favourable for the cultivation of the banana. The plantations are arranged along the banks of the river, which overflows its banks about twice a year; and when it retires to its normal bed it leaves a rich alluvial deposit, which renews the soil and reduces the cost of production, as the plants will go on bearing much longer than

[All Rights Reserved.]

JULY 30, 1898.

those in other districts. A friend, himself engaged in the industry, informed us that the banana-farms in this district paid as much as fifty per cent. per annum for capital invested, and that some few years ago they were paying seventy-five per cent.

The next point of interest on the route is La Junta. Here we enter the valley of the Reventazon, and from this point we leave the plains, or *tierra caliente*, and the ascent to the uplands, or *tierras templadas*, may be said to begin. As the train climbs along the northern slope of the valley the scenery is one of unsurpassed beauty. Away down on its stony bed, the Reventazon, with its huge volume of clear, sparkling water, goes rushing and tumbling to the Caribbean Sea. Both slopes of the valley are covered with primeval forests in all the wild luxuriance of tropical growth. No longer shut in by the banana groves, we get the cool, exhilarating breezes which strike along the valley from the uplands.

At Las Lomas, the *bête noir* of the engineers of the line, we see some traces of the recent slides. During the heavy rains the upper slopes of the valley have an unpleasant way of precipitating themselves into the bed of the river, carrying with them half a mile or so of the track, and increasing enormously the working expenses of the company. The slides, however, this season have been very inconsiderable, and it is the opinion of competent authorities that they are working themselves out. So the British investor may take heart of grace; and when Las Lomas no longer figures largely in the balance-sheets of the company his heavily-discounted shares will begin to soar.

Continuing along the upper slopes of the valley, we come to the Turrialba district. Here the land is more undulating, and sweeps up towards the northern base of Mount Turrialba, the most eastern of the chain of volcanic mountains which trend in a westerly direction towards the Pacific, and which dominate the uplands of Costa Rica to the south and the lowlands of Nicaragua to the north. We are now in the coffee-growing district, although there are considerable tracts of land given over for grazing purposes, with here and there patches of sugar-cane.

The cultivation of coffee, which was the main article of export before bananas were thought of, is almost entirely in the hands of the *peons*, who are the descendants of the early settlers, and are mostly of unmixed Spanish blood. They have a horror of the plains, and, like their forefathers before them, stick to the coffee and the uplands.

The *peon* varies the monotony of coffee-culture by making a little *guaro*, a spirit distilled from the sugar-cane. This with him is a labour of love; but it has to be done 'under the rose,' as the government has the monopoly of all spirits. Nevertheless, no self-respecting *peon* would be without a little drop in his bottle, wherewith he will

always regale a stranger, provided he is properly introduced and the *Guardias* are not about.

The next point of interest is Cartago, the ancient capital, but vacated as the seat of government in favour of San José in 1821, when the Costa Ricans obtained their independence.

To the north, and towering to a height of 11,200 feet above sea-level, stands Mount Irazu, the highest of the Costa Rican cordillera. The summit may be reached on a mule in about eight hours from Cartago, and a view of both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans obtained from it.

After leaving Cartago the grade becomes very severe—about five per cent. The engine struggles up the next two and a half miles to El Alto at the rate of about eight miles an hour; so we have ample time to notice the flora, which has become more familiar to us, and we see several old friends in the honeysuckle, blackberry, elderberry, &c., which grow along the edges of the track.

Arrived at El Alto, 5000 feet above sea-level, we are now at the highest point of the plateau. So, with steam shut off and brakes hard down, we rattle down the first ten miles of the Pacific slope into San José: distance from Port Limon, 103½ miles; time, 8½ hours.

San José is a well-built city of modern construction. There are none of the narrow, tortuous streets, with the heavily iron-barred windows, one sees in the older Spanish-American cities. It stands 3800 feet above sea-level, and its climate has a wonderfully bracing effect on enervated visitors from the plains.

We found the town in a state of war-like preparation. The *peons*, lately called in for military service, were to be seen everywhere being drilled and knocked into shape—swartly little fellows, clad in Paris-made blue jean suits of the French infantry type, but which, like the garments made by the 'Lilliputian tailors,' appeared to be cut on abstract principles. They were all armed with several types of rifles, and thoroughly well equipped except in the matter of boots, which in most cases were conspicuous by their absence, for the *peon* soldier marches best when his feet are unencumbered by foot-gear. Nevertheless, they seemed hardy little men brimming over with patriotism, and no doubt will give a good account of themselves if brought face to face with their natural enemies, the Nicaraguans.

During our stay in the capital we had the good fortune to hear the president, Don Rafael Iglesias, harangue the troops on the subject of the impending war with their neighbours over the much-vexed question of the San Juan River. He is a handsome, hard-working young man, impatient of leading-strings, and a vigorous opponent of the 'mañana' or *laissez faire* policy which too often obtains in the South and Central American republics. He has already done much for the development of his country by encouraging foreign enterprise; and,

among other services, has completed a contract with an American company for a railway from Titives on the Pacific coast to San José, thus connecting the two oceans by a continuous line of rail. Another scheme he has carried through, though of less public utility than the foregoing, is one of which the San Joséans may well be proud—namely, the recent completion and opening of the new Opera House, built at an enormous cost to the nation. We were enabled to see it under very favourable auspices, as the president not only put his box at our disposal, but sent one of his aides-de-camp to look after us. The building appears to be a small edition of the Paris Opera House, but, with its wonderful wealth of polished marble, frescoes, and gilt, is perhaps even more sumptuously got up. The decorations illustrative of the commerce of the republic are by an accomplished Italian artist; but by far the finest and brightest decorations we noticed were the three front rows of handsome, dark-eyed, well-dressed daughters of the soil lining the three tiers of

boxes. The performance, which happened to be *Le Grand Mogul*, was rendered in French by a good company from Paris. The Opera House is said to have cost a million dollars gold currency, or in round numbers two hundred thousand pounds sterling. Taking the population of the republic at two hundred and fifty thousand, this represents sixteen shillings per head of population—an object-lesson to the British paterfamilias who grumbles at the penny in the pound rate for free library purposes.

The four days we remained in San José were made very pleasant for us by several of the members of the English community. Our thanks are also due to the members of the Costa Rican Club for the charming smoking concert they gave us. About the latter we should like to go more into details, but the space at our command in a magazine article will not admit of it. So we must pack up our portmanteaus and be off in the morning train for Port Limon, where, I have no doubt, we shall find the second batch all ready for the road.

JOHN BURNET OF BARNES.

CHAPTER XLIV.—THE END OF ALL THINGS.

I AM writing the last words of this tale in my house of Barnes after many years have come and gone since the things I wrote of. I am now no more young, and my wife is no more a slim maid but a comely woman. The years have been years of peace and some measure of prosperity. Here in Tweeddale life runs easily and calm. Our little county matters are all the care we know, and from the greater world beyond there come only chance rumours of change and vexation. Yet the time has not been idle, for I have busied myself much with study and the care of the land. Many have sought to draw me out to politics and statecraft; but I have ever resisted them, for, after all, are these things of such importance that for them a man should barter his leisure and peace of mind? So I have ever stayed fast in this pleasant dale, and let the bustle and clamour go on without my aid.

It is true that more than once I have made journeys even across the water, and many times to London, on matters of private concern. It was during one of these visits to Flanders that I first learned the importance of planting wood on land, and resolved to make trial on my own estate. Accordingly I set about planting on Barnes, and now have clothed some of the barer spaces of the hills with most flourishing plantations of young trees, drawn in great part from the woods of Dawyck. I can never hope to reap the benefit of them myself, but haply my grandchildren will yet bless me when they find covert

and shade where before was only a barren hill-side.

Also in Tweed I have made two caulds, both for the sake of the fish and to draw off streams to water the meadows. In the wide reaches of water in Stobo haughs I have cut down much of the encumbering brushwood, and thus laid the places open for fishing with the rod. Also with much labour I have made some little progress in cleaning the channel of the river in places where it is foully overlaid with green weed. The result, I am pleased to think, has been good, and the fish thrive and multiply. My crowning triumph befell me two years ago in a wet, boisterous April, when, fishing with a minnow in the pool above Barnes, I landed a trout of full six pounds weight.

The land, which had fallen into neglect in my father's time and my own youth, I did my utmost to restore, and now I have the delight of seeing around me many smiling fields and pleasant dwellings. In the house of Barnes itself I have effected many changes, for it had aforetime been liker a Border keep than an orderly dwelling. But now, what with many works of art and things of interest gathered from my travels abroad, and, above all, through the dainty fingers of my wife, the place has grown gay and well adorned, so that were any of its old time masters to revisit it they would scarce know it for theirs.

Of my own folk I have little to tell. Tam Todd has long since gone the way of all the earth, and lies in Lyne kirkyard with a flat stone above him. New faces are in Barnes and Dawyck, and

there scarce remains one of the old serving-men who aided me in my time of misfortune. Also, many things have changed in all the countryside, and they from whom I used to hear tales as a boy are now no more on the earth. In Peebles there are many new things, and mosses are drained and moors measured out till the whole land wears a trimmer look. But with us all is still the same, for I have no fancy for change in that which I loved long ago, and of which I would fain still keep the remembrance. Saving that I have planted the hillside, I have let the moors and marshes be, and to-day the wild-duck and snipe are as thick on my land as of old.

As for myself, I trust I have outgrown the braggadocio and folly of youth. God send I may not have also outgrown its cheerfulness and spirit! For certain, I am a graver man and less wont to set my delight in trifles. Of old I was the slave of little things, weather, scene, company; but advancing age has brought with it more of sufficiency unto myself. The ringing of sword and bridle has less charm, since it is the reward of years that a man gets more to the core of a matter and has less care for externals. Yet I can still feel the impulses of high passion, the glory of the chase, the stirring of the heart at a martial tale. Now, as I write, things are sorely changed in the land; for, though peace hangs over us at home, I fear it is a traitor's peace at the best, and more horrific than war. Time-servers and greedy sycophants sit in high places, and it is hard to tell if generous feeling be not ousted by a foul desire of gain. It is not for me to say. I have no love for king or parliament, though much for my country. I am no hot-headed king's man—nay, I never was; but when they who rely upon us are sold for a price, when oaths are broken

and honour driven away, I am something less of one than before.

As I write these last words I am sitting in my old library at Barns, looking forth of the narrow window over the sea of landscape. The afternoon is just drawing to evening—the evening of a hot August day, which is scarce less glorious than noon. From the meadow come the tinkling of cattle-bells and the gentle rise and fall of the stream. Elsewhere there is no sound, for the summer weather hangs low and heavy on the land. Just beyond rise the barrier ridges, green and shimmering, and behind all the sombre outlines of the great hills. Below, in the garden, my wife is plucking flowers to deck the table, and playing with the little maid, who is but three years old to-day. Within the room lie heavy shadows and the mellow scent of old books and the faint fragrance of blossom.

And as I look forth on this glorious world, I know not whether to be glad or sad. All the years of my life stretch back till I see as in a glass the pageant of the past. Faint regrets come to vex me, but they hardly stay, and as I look and think I seem to learn the lesson of the years, the great precept of time. And deep in all, more clear as the hours pass and the wrappings fall off, shines forth the golden star of honour, which, if a man follow it, though it be through quagmire and desert, fierce faces and poignant sorrow, will bring him at length to a place of peace.

But these are words of little weight, and I am too long about my business. Behold how great a tale I have written unto you. Take it, and, according to your pleasure, bless or ban the narrator. Haply it will help to whittle away a winter's night, when the doors are barred and the great logs crackle, and the snow comes over Caerdon.

THE END.

MICROBES IN MILK.

By ERNEST C. FINCHAM, M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond.

IT will be readily granted that the inspection of milk and its sources of supply is of even more importance from a public health point of view than the inspection of meat, since milk is so largely used as the

food of infants.

Milk, immediately it is taken from the healthy cow, contains no microbes. Hardly has the milk settled in the pail than they abound, so many as 10,000 in one-quarter cubic inch having been detected. The question which naturally presents itself is, 'Where do they come from?' From the soiled teats, from the soiled hands of the workers, from the atmosphere of the milking-shed, and from the pails themselves. They possess the property of propagating very rapidly.

Monsieur de Freudenrich, of the Berne Labora-

tory, asserts that milk just drawn containing in one-quarter cubic inch 9000 microbes, seven hours later was found to contain 60,000. After a period of twenty-five hours had elapsed, 5,000,000 microbes were present in the same quantity of milk; and if the temperature be raised to ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit, the microbial population of the same milk, during the same time, would reach the enormous total of 812,500,000!

Children appear particularly prone to contract consumption through the agency of milk containing tubercle bacilli.

A Royal Commission appointed 'to inquire into the effect of food derived from tuberculous animals on human health' presented its report to parliament in April 1895. It was therein stated: 'We have obtained ample evidence that food derived from tuberculous animals can produce tuberculosis

in healthy animals. . . . In the absence of direct experiments we infer that man can also acquire tuberculosis by feeding upon materials derived from tuberculous food-animals. Tuberculous matter in milk is exceptionally active in its operations upon animals fed either *with the milk or with dairy produce derived from it*. It cannot, then, be doubted that, in view of the rapidity with which tuberculosis of the udder may become developed, the presence of a tuberculous cow in a dairy is a decided source of danger to the public. No doubt the largest part of the tuberculosis which man obtains through his food is *by means of milk containing tuberculous matter*. . . . We are aware of the preference by English people for drinking cow's milk raw, a practice attended by danger on account of possible contamination by pathogenic organisms. The boiling of milk, even for a moment, would probably be sufficient to remove the very dangerous quality of tuberculous milk.'

When sterilised (boiled) milk has been used a marked diminution takes place in the tendency to infant-cholera during hot weather, which is so terribly fatal to child-life under the age of one year. This ailment in large centres of population is often present to an alarming extent, and it cannot be doubted that injurious conditions represented in the milk form one of the chief causes of this disease. As an active agent in the spread of scarlet fever, diphtheria, and enteric (typhoid) fever, milk is well known, and the risks run by the public in this respect are not imaginary.

A few years ago a man was tried at a London police-court on a charge of stealing milk. In the evidence it transpired that his family was in a state of great destitution, one or more of its members suffering from scarlet fever, and that he had taken a jug from the sick-room, sallied forth, and dipped it into a milk-can. The man was arrested, and the milkman continued his rounds, dispensing the contaminated milk!

An outbreak of enteric fever at Great Harwood, Lancashire, was clearly traceable to the agency of milk infected by human means.

The *Lancet* two years ago cited a case in which a child was attacked by diphtheria at the house of a milkman. The disease was duly notified. The child died in two days. Yet for some days afterwards milk was supplied as usual from the dairy to the customers!

At Finchley a few years ago a somewhat unique outbreak of throat-illness, followed by true diphtheria, occurred. The throat-illness was of short duration, owing to the means taken to combat its appearance. Acute symptoms set in rapidly, the cases were confined to one particular neighbourhood, and in several instances houses were invaded by multiple attacks. Houses of all classes and of different sanitary conditions were attacked, the common factor of the problem being the milk-supply. On the fourth day of the outbreak a

handbill was issued warning all persons to boil the milk. Twenty-four hours after the issue of this notice the epidemic was arrested as suddenly as it had commenced. It was noticed that the better-class houses—those using the most milk—were the chief sufferers. A careful examination of the throats of the milkers showed nothing amiss, but three of the cows were found to have diseased teats, and one had a chronic abscess of the udder! The remedy in this case was boiling the milk. However, there are many people who will not adopt this simple plan, either on account of the extra trouble or because an unpleasant taste is imparted to the milk by boiling.

Milk can now be obtained from several large vendors which has been thoroughly and efficiently sterilised by heat applied under pressure; by this means ebullition is prevented, yet the high temperature maintained destroys all germ-life without in any way altering the outward appearance or ordinary properties of the milk. The milk is obtained in the first place from selected farms, and is supplied under a stringent contract. Samples of the milk are taken and submitted to a careful test in order to determine the degree of alkalinity. Should this fall below a certain point the milk is rejected; if the milk, after testing, is found to be satisfactory, it is poured into a 'receiver' capable of holding about 400 gallons. The milk then flows by gravitation through a double filter of swan's-down and muslin into an 'amalgamator.' The filter is a cylindrical vessel of tinned copper about a foot in diameter and two feet high, containing two 'grids' eight inches apart. These 'grids' are perforated discs of tinned iron; the layers of swan's-down being placed upon and secured to the discs by the muslin referred to above. The filtration takes place from below upwards, in order that all sediment may remain at the bottom of the filter. The importance of the filtration process may be gauged from the investigations of Dr Backhaus, who has calculated that the milk supplied to the people of Berlin is so foul as to compel the Berliners to consume in this way three hundred-weight per diem of excrementitious material derived from the cows.

The 'amalgamator' consists of a tinned copper vessel with a lid. Through the lid runs a vertical shaft, having at its lower end an apparatus which closely resembles the screw-propeller of a steamer. This screw is kept in constant motion whilst the 'amalgamator' is filling, in order to ensure a thorough admixture of the cream which may have arisen to the upper surface of the milk during the period of filtration. From this vessel the milk flows through a second filter (similar in dimensions and construction to the first) into the syphon bottling-machine, where the bottles are automatically filled with milk to the requisite level. The construction of this machine is ingenious. The syphons are pivoted, and to one end is

attached a weight, so that when the bottle is removed this weight immediately throws the syphon back and *seals it* by bringing an india-rubber ring attached to the end which is immersed in the milk in contact with the containing tank. The bottles are then placed in 'baskets' and conveyed to the sterilising machine. This is a huge tinned copper box, the upper part of which can be raised or lowered at will. When everything is in readiness the lid is closed and securely clamped. Steam generated from absolutely pure water is allowed to flow freely in, and the bottles are left for a prescribed time under a pressure of about 5 lb. per square inch, corresponding to a temperature (nearly) of 219 degrees Fahrenheit. The safety-valve is then gradually opened, and when the pressure has fallen to the necessary

extent a crank is turned—this draws the 'closing bars' down—and the bottles are effectually sealed under the exclusion of the atmosphere. In this way all noxious germs in the milk, arising from contact of the raw milk with an impure atmosphere or any other source of contamination, are rendered harmless.

Milk, next to bread, is more largely consumed than any other food-stuff, and it is a notable exception, for almost every other article of food is subjected to a process of sterilisation by heat—namely, cooking—before we eat it.

This article is not intended to stand as a finger-post, pointing the way to a medical boggy, but rather to draw attention to a very real danger which is often ignored either through ignorance or carelessness.

QUEEN ELMA.

CHAPTER V.



AS I approached the Rathhaus, I was challenged by a sentry. I presented my pass.

'I am Father Wiemann,' I said as firmly as I could, 'and I have been sent for by the Count Ulric.'

He saluted, and then conducted me to the guard-room, where the order for admittance was scrutinised by the sergeant. I remained as much as possible in the shadow.

'This is a bad business,' said the sergeant, turning to me and shaking his head. 'When the mob hear the Count is dead Heaven knows what will happen.'

'We shall all have our throats cut,' put in a soldier.

'Silence, fool!' thundered the sergeant. 'Who gave you permission to speak? Show the good father to the Count's cell.'

The man picked up a lamp and went out through the door. I followed him.

'If they choose me for one of those to fire on him,' he said to me, 'I'll throw down my rifle, come what may. I'll not have his blood on my head.'

We were passing through a dark passage at the time. I touched the man on the arm.

'Young man,' I said, 'if you raise your hand against the Count you will be damned eternally. I say this by the authority of the Holy Church.'

The light from the lamp fell on his pale, affrighted face.

'I'll not do it, I swear,' he muttered, crossing himself.

'I charge you to tell your companions what I have said,' I went on.

'I will,' he responded fervently.

We had emerged from the gloomy passage into a better-lighted corridor, which, I could see, was patrolled by a sentry. I drew the scarf higher over my face, and for the first time my heart palpitated violently. But no suspicion was aroused. The sentry summoned the janitor, who, after a casual scrutiny of the order for admittance, inserted his key into the lock of a door.

'You are late,' he observed. 'We expected you before this.'

I heard the bolt shoot back, and the door of the cell swung open.

I entered. 'See that I am not disturbed,' I said to the official who had admitted me.

He nodded, and the door clanged to.

The cell was lit by one small lamp. It was a little time before my eyes accustomed themselves to the half-light. At length I was able to make out the form of a man stretched on a mattress upon the floor. I moved the lamp nearer. It was Ulric; he was sleeping as peacefully as a child. Even the noise of my entrance had not disturbed him.

His gorgeous uniform looked out of place in the obscurity of the cell. I crossed to him and put my hand on his arm.

'Wake up!'

He sat up with a sudden start. 'What is it? Is it time?' he said. Then his glance fell on me. 'Ah, father! you have come at last.'

'Yes, I have come.'

A look of doubt swept over his face at the sound of my voice.

'Surely it is not Father Wiemann?' he said, peering at me doubtfully.

'No.' I unwound the scarf from my neck and took off my hat. 'You know me now?'

He looked, and then burst into an uproarious laugh. 'The young Englishman.'

'Hush, hush!' I looked round anxiously. What would the sentry think if they heard sounds of merriment proceeding from the cell where a priest was supposed to be administering the last sacred rites?

'What is the idea?' asked Ulric.

'You and I will change clothes, and you will leave here in my place. Father Wiemann is to have a horse awaiting you at the bridge on the Lapsburg road.'

'And yourself?'

'Oh, I'm all right,' I responded lightly. 'You may be sure I will declare my identity in good time.'

'Yes, but'—

'Don't forget I am the English ambassador's nephew. They can do nothing but escort me to the frontier.'

He looked at me thoughtfully. 'Yes,' he said; 'I suppose you are safe enough.' Then he reached out his hand and took mine. 'It is a plucky thing to do—what one might expect from an Englishman. And I—thank you.'

'I promised Kata,' I murmured.

'Poor Kata!'

'We mustn't waste time,' I said. 'We are far from being out of the wood.'

'We've got to change clothes, haven't we?'

I nodded. He began to strip off his gay uniform. As he took off one of his heavy boots, he let it fall on the ground with a terrible clatter. I threw up my arms appealingly. 'For heaven's sake be careful!'

'I am very sorry.'

In a few minutes I had struggled into his clothes, and he into mine. I wound the scarf round his neck.

'You are a little taller than I,' I remarked. 'You had better stoop a little.'

'Will this do?' He bent himself nearly double.

'I'm not more than half an inch shorter,' I rejoined vexedly. 'And I think you had better be overcome by the sad scene you have left. Cover your face with your handkerchief.'

He went to the door of the cell, and then came back.

'We will meet again, and I will thank you then.'

'You have nothing to thank me for,' I replied hastily, 'except for getting you into this mess.'

'No, no,' he rejoined. 'At the most, you only precipitated matters. The end must have come sooner or later. I have been thinking, and I see I have acted shabbily. I have allowed myself to be a mere tool in the hands of others. Worse than that, I have acted dishonourably in letting Elma believe I loved her when I knew my heart was another's.'

He spoke with a solemnity that I had never before witnessed in him.

'But the crown is rightly mine,' he went on almost defiantly. 'I deny that I have done wrong in striving to gain it. I may have made mistakes, but'—

I was anxious to get him away. Every moment seemed a waste of precious time.

'I hope you will retrieve your mistakes in the future,' I said sententiously. 'But you will have a difficulty in doing so if you are shot at sunrise. Come, hasten. This is no time to moralise.'

'I am going,' he rejoined submissively. He strode to the door.

'Open!' he shouted.

'Be quiet!' I exclaimed angrily. 'They will recognise your voice if you speak. Now, do try and think what you are doing. Remember this is a serious matter for you.'

The door opened; he smiled over his shoulder at me, and then concealed his face in a handkerchief. I flung myself down on my knees in the darkest corner of the cell, my face bowed in my hands. As Ulric went out the janitor entered and moved about the cell.

'It will be daybreak in an hour,' he observed cheerily.

He soon left me, and I heard the door close after him. I sprang up and arranged the lamp so that the mattress was in shadow. Then I flung myself down on it and tried to sleep; but it was impossible. The thoughts went buzzing through my brain like a flock of angry bees. Had Ulric escaped? Had the priest managed to procure a horse? Supposing the guard refused to accept my explanation that I was not their prisoner? It was useless to strive to sleep. I sat up, and, leaning against the wall with my arms folded, resolved to wait till the allotted time should dispose of my questionings.

I had not sat long when I heard the key turn in the lock. Had the time arrived so soon? I felt my heart beating. Or was it the return of Ulric?

I flung myself down on the mattress, with my face to the wall. I heard the door open and footsteps approach my side. I lay still, wondering who the intruder was, and then I felt a light touch on my shoulder.

'Ulric,' said a woman's voice. I did not move, but my heart almost ceased to beat from astonishment. It was the voice of the Queen!

I felt the fingers wander to my cheek, and I turned towards her, praying that the shadow was deep enough to disguise my features.

'Elma!' I ejaculated sleepily, my knuckles in my eyes.

'Yes, it is I.'

'Why have you come?' I murmured.

'I wanted to speak to you.'

'I would rather be—alone.'

She flung up her arms with a wild gesture.

'You hate me?'

I was silent. She commenced to pace the narrow cell restlessly.

'Ulric, Ulric!' she went on excitedly; 'do you remember the days when we were children together? I loved you then. I tried to help you, to protect you, to keep you from sin and sorrow.' A wild sob rose to her lips. 'And now, look at us. You are lying there, and I stand here a miserable woman. This is the end of it all. May God help us both!' She burst into tearless sobs.

I lay still, for if I came within the circle of the lamp's light or spoke much discovery was certain. Suddenly I felt her breath on my cheek and her arms round my neck.

'Ulric,' she whispered. 'Ulric, I love you. I cannot let you die. I was mad last night—mad with rage and jealousy; but now I am calm.' Her arms tightened their clasp. 'I thank God, He has awakened me before it is too late. When the day dawns you will be free to leave Lapsburg and its wretched Queen and all the sorrow and pain of these last days. You will be free to go away into the wide world, where you will never see Elma, whom you hate, and where Kata will always be by your side.'

The pathos in her voice brought the tears to my eyes. Suddenly she broke into wild, hysterical weeping.

'Why could you not have loved me?' she moaned. 'Why did you lie to me? Oh, how cruel you have been!'

I remained uncomfortably silent. What could I do? Suddenly she bent over me, and I felt her passionate kisses on my face. I struggled to free myself. It seemed that I was fated to be put into false positions. I had not betrayed my identity because I feared that Ulric had not had time to make good his escape. But how far was I justified in listening to wild outpourings which were obviously not intended for me? How far was I entitled to receive her kisses?

I sat up. 'Don't,' I cried, full of shame and bewilderment. 'For heaven's sake, stop!'

She was on her knees by my side. I sat up and looked at her. The day had broken, and from the barred window in the wall a faint gray light was feebly making its way. Over the Queen's face I could see bewilderment gathering. She sprang to her feet and turned the lamp, so that its rays fell full on my face.

For some moments she stood silent.

'You are not Ulric?' she said at last, with obvious effort.

'No,' I replied, hopelessly, helplessly. 'I am not Ulric.'

She pushed up the lamp and held it close.

'Who are you? I know your face.'

'I am Lord Carton's nephew.'

'Ah! How came you here?'

I began to tell her, when the blood suddenly rushed to her face.

'How dared you'—she began. I knew she was thinking of those burning kisses she had pressed upon my lips. She clenched her hands, and for a moment I thought she was going to strike me.

'I am sorry; but I could not help it.'

'Oh!' She ground her teeth.

'I can only express my regret at your unfortunate mistake,' I went on humbly. For a time she was silent, and then, though I may be mistaken, I thought I saw the flicker of a smile pass over her face.

'Where is the Count?' she said, and undoubtedly her voice was softer. She looked round the cell, as if to find him. Then her eyes fell on the clothes I was wearing.

'These are his!' she exclaimed.

I nodded. 'If you will but listen'—

'Go on.'

I told her the whole story in as few words as possible. She listened quietly. When I had finished she held out her hand.

'It was brave of you, and I am glad—yes, I am glad you did it. It will save trouble and possible complication.' She stood thoughtfully silent for a few seconds. 'But when you see Ulric again—if you ever see him—tell him that I had decided not to let him die. Tell him this, for my sake. I cannot bear that he should think I was without merely.'

I took her hand and raised it to my lips.

'I might have guessed,' I said softly, 'that your heart would relent.'

She looked at me with some favour.

'Perhaps you were wiser not to have trusted to the chance. A woman who has been insulted'—

'Ulric's last words to me,' I interposed hastily, 'were of keen regret that he should have caused you pain.'

She moved a little impatiently. 'Come,' she said, 'there is no longer reason why you should be confined here.'

She pushed open the cell-door and walked out. I followed her. We met the janitor in the passage. When his glance fell on my face he could not restrain a cry of astonishment. The Queen turned at the sound.

'A pretty jailer you have proved yourself,' she said contemptuously. The look of bewilderment on the man's face seemed to strike her as ridiculous, for she gave a short laugh. 'Be more careful another time,' she said, and led the way down the corridor.

At the entrance to the building we encountered the guard. I shall never forget their looks of astonishment. The Queen beckoned the sergeant.

'So you have let the Count Ulric escape?' she said sternly.

'Escape!' ejaculated the sergeant. 'It is impossible.'

'The priest!' exclaimed one of the men.

The Queen turned on him sharply.

'You are clever!' she exclaimed; 'but it is after the event.'

Outside, a closed carriage had been drawn up. The day had not fully dawned, and the boulevards stretched gray and dim in front of us.

I opened the carriage door for her. She made as if to enter, and then stopped.

'Our ways part here,' she said. 'It is probable we shall not meet again.'

'I hope we shall meet again,' I murmured. Her lips parted as if to smile, but she restrained herself.

'You will no doubt leave Lapsburg to-day?' There was a note of command in her voice.

I bowed. 'It will perhaps be best.'

'Much the best.' She again moved as if to enter the carriage, and again turned. She held out her hand.

'Good-bye.'

I took her hand, and raising it to my lips, kissed it several times, with unnecessary fervour. Why I did this I can hardly say. She was handsome, and I am too susceptible. Perhaps

her kisses were still warm on my face. At any rate, I kissed her hand with a passion which was inexcusable.

She drew her hand away, and her face reddened.

'Yes,' she said, with no great indignation in her voice; 'you must leave Lapsburg to-day.'

She entered the carriage, and I closed the door. As the carriage drove off she leant forward.

'Good-bye,' she said again with wonderful softness in her voice, and smiled.

And so, rather urged on by my good uncle, the noon of that eventful morning saw me beyond the frontier of Herzoglia. Now I am back again at Oxford, pursuing the routine of an undergraduate's life. I should be half-inclined to consider the whole matter as a dream if it were not that I received only the other day, through my uncle, a letter from Count Ulric, thanking me for what he called the services I had rendered him. The letter was from Vienna, where he urged me cordially to visit him.

I wonder sometimes whether, in the days to come, Elma, Ulric, and myself will meet again.

FRUIT: ITS CULTIVATION AND SUPPLY.

By Dr A. J. H. CRESPI, Wimborne.



COMPLAINT almost certain to be heard every autumn in the fruit-growing districts is that the abundance of plums is such that it does not pay to gather and send them to market. It is quite possible that in those districts where plums grow and bear luxuriantly there may have been a superabundance, and prices may have been unremunerative. Unfortunately, in most country towns fruit is never plentiful, seldom of good quality, and rarely cheap. Our fruit orchards are confined to certain limited regions—for example, the neighbourhood of Stratford-on-Avon and of Sittingbourne. The country at large knows them not, and it comes about that, while in some of our great towns good plums may sell at two pounds for three-halfpence, or even for a halfpenny a pound retail—they do in Birmingham in plentiful years, and pears have before now been almost unsaleable in some places—in other places, not so very far off, very inferior fruit may be fetching fourpence a pound. It may be perfectly true, moreover, that in the plum and pear districts the prices are too low; but would not the best remedy for this state of things be the combination of fruit-preserving factories with fruit-growing?—while far too little has yet been attempted in tinning vegetables. Last winter strawberry jam sold, in a small country town, at sevenpence-half-

penny, black-currant jam at sixpence, and plum jam, weighed out and sold over the counter, at threepence-halfpenny the pound. It must be perfectly obvious that in abundant years fruit-growers would do far better to preserve a large part of their excess, and not, for a few days or weeks, flood the market with one of the most perishable of all vegetable products. Fruit-preserving factories do not require a very elaborate or costly plant, and can be easily conducted. In some towns they have been tried and have answered.

I quote from a recent issue of the *Journal* of the Board of Agriculture a most suggestive passage: 'Practical men not only hold that the fruit-acreage of this country is not excessive, but that it may be extended, and that fruit-trees and fruit-bushes may, with due regard to the dominating conditions of soil, climate, and situation, and in reasonable propinquity to populous places, still be planted with good prospects of profit. It is essential, however that more care than is often forthcoming should be taken as to details of cultivation, picking, packing, and sale. It should be remembered when planting that it is very desirable to ensure a regular succession of fruit. When fruit plantations are made there should be a due proportion of each kind of fruit tree, plant, and bush suitable to the locality, in order that all the eggs may not be in one basket.'

Fruit-farmers, as a rule, consign the whole of their fruit to the nearest fruit-market without any regard to the state of supply and demand. To some extent, it may be said, this is unavoidable in the case of soft fruit, which *must be sold* as it ripens. And as by far the largest part of the fruit grown in this country is produced in counties near London, the three fruit-markets of the metropolis—the Borough, Covent Garden, and Spitalfields—are frequently glutted in seasons like the last, and fruit is occasionally unsaleable, or sold at absurdly low and unremunerative rates, because the supply exceeds the demand limited by the capabilities of the distributing machinery of these three centres. At the same time, in some of the suburbs of London, in many of the large provincial towns, and even in many country towns and villages fruit is either not obtainable or only at prices which make it a luxury.

Fruit does not require a large outlay nor an extensive plot of land. A most interesting little book by the late Archdeacon William Lea, M.A., entitled *Small Farms: How they can be made to answer by Means of Fruit-Growing*, contains a passage deserving close attention:

'In 1864 I bought three acres; and having long had a hobby in favour of small farms, I commenced to ride it at once, with a view of seeing how far such farms might be made to pay if planted with fruit. One portion I devoted to specimen-trees of various kinds—apples, pears, plums, gooseberries—with a view of ascertaining the sorts which would make the best return if planted in quantities. On another portion I experimented with vegetables, and on a third I made a plantation of gooseberries, black-currants, and plums, and sold the produce. It is of this third portion, as nearly as possible one acre in extent, that I purpose to give an account. I first cleaned and double-dug the land, made a broad walk up the middle, and then planted it with bushes six feet apart, in rows six feet from one another. Among these I planted plums—some twenty-four, others only twelve feet apart. My stock consisted of 800 gooseberries, 320 black-currants, and 110 plums—1230 in all; the exact number to an acre, planting six feet apart, is 1255. For the first three years I had room for three lines of potatoes or other vegetables between the rows; then, as the bushes increased in size, for two; and in the last and seventh year for one line only.' That beautiful orchard is now part of the Droitwich public park.

Fruit-trees, when in full bearing, require comparatively little attention, though they are all the better for some care, and for many years they usually continue bearing more and more abundantly. Four hundred bushels of apples per acre have been gathered, and a single Blenheim pippin has been known to yield from twenty to thirty bushels of excellent fruit; while the number of plums, pears, and cherries to the acre sometimes

picked is enormous, and even at low wholesale prices represents many pounds sterling per acre and leaves a handsome balance to the grower. The real difficulty, however, is that nearly all the available fruit is poured into a very few great towns, where the heavy rent and rates leave the fruit-farmer the barest possible margin. This winter much more fresh tinned fruit has come into the market, and here lies the true outlet in seasons of over-abundant fruit crops.

What we urgently need is more orchards in those vast districts where fruit is so scarce as to be seldom seen, and where it does not form any appreciable part of the ordinary food of the population. Much remains to be done before this desirable state of things is brought about. On the whole the area given to fruit is considerable, and is growing, but it is mainly confined to a few counties, or, still worse, to parts of counties.

In 1890, according to the agricultural returns, the area devoted to small fruit-trees was 4300 acres more than in the previous year, while in 1873 there were not 150,000 acres of orchards in Great Britain. Twenty years later the area had reached 203,000 acres. Moreover, in the former year the whole area given to fruit, nursery, and market gardening was little more than 200,000 acres. We are undoubtedly moving, but not nearly fast enough.

The chief stumbling-block to a better fruit-supply in country towns is the difficulty of knowing how to sell the fruit—that is, of reaching or getting at the consumer. This applies, too, to all sorts of agricultural produce, which often costs the small householder, when he is fortunate enough to get any, enormously more than the highest prices he sees quoted in the papers as ruling in the great towns.

One of the easiest ways out of the difficulty would seem to be building, where market-houses do not exist, covered rooms large enough for a dozen or even a score of country-women to stand in and sell their produce. A small charge—a shilling a day—could be made, and in this way, were the place open two days a week, the convenience to residents would be enormous, while sellers and producers would find a ready and remunerative market. Fruit, vegetables, poultry, rabbits, eggs, and flowers could be sold promptly and at good prices, and without the costly intervention of railway charges and middlemen. These women would not only sell the produce of their own gardens and allotments, but in many cases they would also sell that of their neighbours on commission. A great impetus would thereby be given to raising fruit and garden vegetables—a boon to growers not less than to purchasers.

Such market-houses need not be dear. £1000 would build a large one, whilst half that sum would, generally speaking, be sufficient, and would provide ample accommodation for a dozen, or even twenty, women; and at the charge suggested—one

shilling per day—a gross return of from £50 to £100 a year could be counted upon.

Some such plan is urgently needed, because in many small country towns orchard and garden produce can hardly be got at all; or when it is to be bought, it is at prohibitive prices. Most country greengrocers have their own gardens, and will only sell their own produce, for which they charge long prices; while the country folks, even when they have a large surplus to sell, can only do so by walking wearily from house to house on the chance of securing purchasers. Sometimes a dozen higglers will call in a day; at other times not one will be seen for weeks at a time. In short, small country towns have few of the conveniences, and none of the abundance, of great towns.

An abundant and cheap supply of fruit in our small towns would give a much-needed stimulus to

fruit and market gardening, and would also lead to much extra labour being utilised. At present the dweller in country towns may hear much of the superabundance of fruit; all he actually sees of it is when he chances to pay a visit to a large town, where he observes every imaginable variety and quality for sale at prices which positively stagger him. A year or two ago in certain country towns in the south of England pears were offered at half-a-crown per dozen, and half-ripe bitter plums at tenpence a pound, though in certain great towns the former were sixpence a dozen, and the latter a penny a pound. Vegetables, too, were as dear; and old tough peas were being sold at one-and-eightpence the peck in a certain important Dorset town, with 120 trains a day, on a particular day when from fivepence to sevenpence was being asked in Birmingham for peas of far better quality.

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

By T. W. WILKINSON.



MARK EDMONDSON did not wear his heart on his sleeve, but he started as his eye caught a bill on the notice-board outside Bow Street Police Station. It was headed, in black, aggressive capitals, 'Murder,' and it contained the usual vile reproduction of a photograph—a photograph for which he would, in the days when he cultivated a moustache and small 'side-blinds,' have passed as the original. The portrait was astonishingly like the Mark Edmondson of three years ago.

His companion noticed his momentary surprise, and, following his glance, thought that the cause was the announcement as a whole. 'You're not George Dixon, wanted for the Plymouth murder, are you?' he asked jocularly. 'If you are, I'd better arrest you at once.'

'No; I've done nothing yet to make the police or the public interested in my features,' said Edmondson carelessly. 'The fact is, Mr Dobson'—he paused for a moment, and then continued, obviously as the result of second thoughts—'I once knew a face remarkably like that villainous visage.'

Looking again at the bill, he followed Inspector Dobson into the police-station. After jotting down in his note-book a few details of an arrest, he hurried down to the *Comet* Office in Fleet Street, and was soon closeted with his editor.

'I've just hit on a scheme for proving how grossly incompetent our detectives are,' he began.

'Yes?' observed the chief calmly. He was not prone to fall into raptures over his young men's feats in eccentric journalism. Although he was then publishing a series of scathing articles on the

administration of Scotland Yard—sensational 'copy' was uncommonly scarce—he listened with much the same air that he would have assumed if the reporter had asked for an increase of salary.

Edmondson then related how surprised he had been on seeing the Plymouth murderer's portrait. 'Now,' he proceeded, 'what I propose is this: Suppose I go to Clarkson's, get made up as Dixon—that won't be a very difficult matter—and ramble about for a few hours, shoving myself right under the very nose of the police. The chances are that nobody will identify me as the wanted man. If I am not pulled up—well, that will be another proof of the incapacity of the detective force. If, on the other hand, I should be arrested, I can easily regain my liberty by throwing off all disguise and explaining that I wanted "copy." In any case, I can do a personal-experience article.'

'All right,' said the editor, turning to his desk. 'Take the thing in hand at once.'

The reporter left the office in a complacent mood. He thought he saw his way to creating a sensation. Returning to Bow Street, he carefully perused the description of the murderer, and then walked over to Wellington Street and plunged straightway into Clarkson's. When he came out again he was a fac-simile of Dixon, as well as of his former self.

As he walked along the Strand he surveyed the reflection of his figure in shop windows with increasing delight; but when he reached Charing Cross he tried to place himself in the position of the hunted man. First he circled Trafalgar Square, thence making his way leisurely to Hyde Park Corner. Then he perambulated Regent Street for half-an-hour. All the while he looked every constable he met straight in the face and favoured those whom he imagined to be 'Yard men' with

a prolonged stare. But, much to his disgust, they took no more notice of him than of any other unit of London's millions.

'The idiots!' he mentally exclaimed as he skirted Leicester Square. 'A murderer might walk about in broad daylight for a whole week without being arrested.'

When he again arrived at Charing Cross he hardly knew what to do. So far his ramble had been productive of hardly any incident. There had not, indeed, been a single event worth a couple of lines of 'copy.' And yet he was tired of masquerading as a murderer. Should he return to the office, or was it worth while to prowl about for another hour? As he stood on the kerb disappointed and irresolute a hand was laid gently on his shoulder, and simultaneously a voice whispered in his ear, 'Mr Dixon.'

Edmondson's heart throbbed violently as he wheeled round. 'At last!' he exclaimed. 'So you have found me, then?'

The owner of the hand was a shabbily-dressed man, whom the reporter had not, to his knowledge, ever seen before. His whole air was mysterious, and he glanced furtively from right to left, as if desirous that the attention of passers-by should not be attracted. 'Not a word,' he said, warningly raising a very dirty forefinger.

'Oh, I know all about that,' returned Edmondson airily. "'Your wushup, I cautioned the prisoner," &c.'

'Recognised you in a moment, but I've only just seen you,' went on the stranger hurriedly; and, thrusting something into Edmondson's breast-pocket, he instantly darted away, and was quickly swallowed up in the flowing tide of humanity.

The reporter was for some moments too much astonished to move or speak; he could only gaze after the man open-mouthed. What did it mean? Here he had been practically caught only to be let go again! Ah! what was in his pocket? It was an envelope, sealed but unaddressed. Hastily tearing it open, he found inside a short note:

'Tuesday.

'Shall have the money for you on Thursday night. Will be at St Pancras in time for you to catch the midnight train to L'pool.'

Instantly a flood of light dawned on him. He had been mistaken for the murderer, not by a detective, but by an emissary of the man's friends, who were assisting him to fly from England! Doubtless the fugitive was then in town, and should have been at Charing Cross at about the time he (Edmondson) was there.

'Was there ever such a coincidence—or such luck?' thought the reporter. 'Anything more extraordinary I never heard of. Why, this little adventure will be worth no end of "copy." I must find Dobson.'

Hailing a cab, he drove to Scotland Yard, and, giving a constable one of his own cards, asked to see

Inspector Dobson. He was shown into a small room, and presently that gentleman entered. When he caught sight of his visitor he seemed not a little perplexed, glancing two or three times with knitted brows from Edmondson's face to the bit of pasteboard.

The reporter burst into deep-chested laughter. 'It's all right,' he said. Then he told the detective of his quest for 'copy' and its wholly unexpected result. 'Here is the letter,' he concluded, pulling from his pocket the note given to him at Charing Cross, 'and, unless I am greatly mistaken, it will lead to the arrest of the Plymouth murderer.'

Inspector Dobson read and re-read the message, smiling massively the while. 'Capital!' he exclaimed.

'Isn't it?' asked the reporter gleefully. 'It gives the whole thing away.'

'Just so,' said the Inspector. 'And you've put us in for a smart capture by a plan to show us up! By the way, what are you going to do about your article now?'

'That depends upon circumstances,' responded Edmondson cautiously.

The detective looked at the note. "'Tuesday.'" It is now Thursday; so he's going to cut down to Liverpool to-night.'

'To think of his taking the high-road to America!' said Edmondson, with scorn. 'He couldn't have a dog's chance of getting through in any circumstances. What an ass he must be!'

'Criminals of his class generally are,' said the detective sententiously. 'What about to-night?' he queried abruptly. 'You'll turn up at St Pancras?'

'Certainly.'

'Do so, by all means,' said the Inspector. 'You'll have a big sensation to-morrow. I'll meet you outside the station, opposite the clock-tower, at half-past eleven—no, say a quarter-past.'

Shortly after eleven o'clock the reporter was at the appointed place of meeting. Inspector Dobson was not there, nor did he put in an appearance at the quarter-hour. Edmondson paced to and fro, fuming with impatience and frequently glancing at the clock, till the hands indicated that in ten minutes the express to the north would start on its long journey. Still there was no sign of the detective. The reporter, his mind teeming with a thousand forebodings, then strolled up to the departure platform. Beginning at the guard's van, he walked from end to end of the midnight train, looking in every compartment; but, to his bitter chagrin, he could not see anybody in the least like his mental portrait of the Plymouth murderer. Scarcely had he reached the engine than there was a banging of carriage-doors, a waving of lamps, a mellow whistle, and then the train moved out of the station.

'Confound it!' muttered Edmondson, as he watched the red light on the rear van grow fainter and fainter. 'Neither Dobson nor the murderer here. What's happened now?'

This question remained unanswered till the following morning, when the pressman found on his desk a letter from Inspector Dobson:

'Our detectives,' wrote that gentleman, 'may be "asleep" (*Comet*, August 14), but they are sufficiently wide awake to hoax some enterprising but credulous journalists. By accident I saw you

go into a certain establishment this morning, and I also saw you—though not by accident—come out again. Putting two and two together, I had you watched, soon guessed your game, and proved that I was right by means of the letter you received. I hope you were not seriously inconvenienced by your journey to St Paneras last night.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.



MUCH interest has been aroused by Professor Ramsay's discovery of certain new constituents of the atmosphere, due to a method of research rendered possible by the fractional distillation of air in its liquid form.

In the first place, 750 cubic centimetres of the liquid were reduced to 10 centimetres, the gas from which, after being deprived of its oxygen and nitrogen, left a residual vapour, which gave, besides the spectrum of argon, an additional spectrum before unknown. This new gaseous element has been named Krypton ('concealed'). By the same method of research it has since been discovered that argon has intimately associated with it two gaseous substances which there is every reason to believe are also elementary in their nature. The lighter of these two constituents of argon has been named 'Neon,' and the heavier one 'Metargon.' These bodies have hitherto escaped detection by the most careful observers, and would have yet remained undiscovered had it not been for the new power which liquid air gives to the physicist.

OUR MUSEUMS.

A select committee of the House of Commons is inquiring into a very important subject—that of the administration of the museums of the Science and Art Department, and they are examining as witnesses those who are best able to give information as to the educational value of these establishments. One of the witnesses very opportunely called attention to the late Professor Huxley's opinion that this nation would have to face an industrial war, the result of which would be far more serious than a mere national war. It would not be a question of battleships and cruisers, but a question of schools. So far as the British fleet was concerned, it was supposed to be twice as strong as the fleets of any two Powers. That might be so, but educationally we were scarcely on a level with Switzerland. We could not hope to fight this struggle for existence unless we had battleships—by which he meant thoroughly developed scholastic institutions.

ANIMAL ODOURS.

A curious fatality lately occurred in the streets of London owing to a horse being frightened by

the smell of a performing bear, the vehicle to which the horse was attached being brought into collision with a wagon, and one of its occupants killed. In commenting upon this lamentable accident, the *Lancet* points out that horses are peculiarly sensible to and terrified by the odour of a bear or of a camel, and suggests that fear of the bear may be a reminiscence of that far-away time when the primeval horse became a prey to the cave bear. But no such explanation can be given for the horse's dislike to the proximity of a camel, whose smell, although disagreeable, is not much more offensive than, and very similar to, that of a goat, to which animal the horse shows no aversion. There certainly can be no hereditary fear of the camel, as there may be of the bear, and it is difficult to account for the horse's antipathy to the first-named animal. The subject of animal odours is a very interesting one, and it does not seem to have received the attention which it deserves. It may be that some of the dumb animals have a far more acute sense of smell than we give them credit for, just as we know that some of them have more sensitive hearing apparatus than is possessed by the human family.

THE RABBIT PEST.

Australia and New Zealand are now trying another plan to cope with the rabbit pest. Instead of being poisoned, the rabbits are now trapped, frozen in their skins, packed in crates, and exported to London as an article of food. It is hoped that this new departure will lead to a rapid diminution of the prolific rodents. Some, indeed, prophesy that the animals will be brought to the point of extermination in a few years. The success of the experiment depends upon whether the frozen rabbits will present a palatable and wholesome food. If this proves to be the case they will be welcomed as a boon. But it must be remembered that for many years rabbits have been imported to this country in tins in that overcooked condition common to this type of food, and that they have not been looked upon as delicacies. Let us hope that the frozen food will meet with better appreciation.

HOW TO VANQUISH THE MOSQUITO.

According to an American paper, *The Public Health Journal*, the dreaded mosquito, which is

such an intolerable nuisance in the summer months, more particularly along river-banks and on the seacoast, can be easily abated by the use of a very simple remedy. It is stated that but two and a half hours are required for the development of the full-grown mosquito from a mere speck, its first stage. It can be instantly killed either in its infancy or at maturity by contact with minute quantities of permanganate of potash, the cheap purple salt which is used so much for disinfecting purposes. It is said that a solution of the salt containing only one part in fifteen thousand of water, distributed in the marshes where the mosquito breeds, will render the development of their larvæ impossible. To quote the *Journal* itself: 'A handful of permanganate will oxidise a ten-acre swamp, kill its embryo insects, and keep it free from organic matter for thirty days at a cost of twenty-five cents. With care, a whole state may be kept free of insect pests at a small cost. An efficacious method is to scatter a few crystals widely apart. A single pinch of permanganate has killed all the germs in a thousand-gallon tank.'

AN ACQUIRED HABIT.

It is a matter of general knowledge that the mountain parrot of New Zealand, the kea, has acquired the very destructive habit of piercing the backs of sheep with its sharp beak in order to feed on the kidney fat of the unfortunate animals attacked. It was at one time believed that the birds had learned this habit from procuring fatty particles from the skins of sheep which had been slaughtered; but now a more likely solution of the problem has been suggested by a correspondent of the *Zoologist*. This gentleman, who writes from Melbourne, tells us that in the hilly districts of the middle island of New Zealand there grows in great quantity a white lichen which bears a strong resemblance to sheep's wool. Beneath this lichen are to be found small white fatty substances, which some suppose to be the seeds of the plant, and others describe as maggots which infest it; but whatever they be, they form a favourite food of the kea. It is suggested that the bird, misled by the resemblance of the sheep's wool, digs down into the flesh in the hope of finding this white substance of which it is so fond, and that in this way the new habit has been originated. In the first place, probably the birds were misled by mistaking dead sheep for masses of the lichen under which they had been accustomed to find their favourite food.

X-RAY PHENOMENA.

The discovery of the mysterious X-rays by Professor Röntgen of Würzburg was considered of so much importance in our own country that a Röntgen Society was soon suggested and established. This society busies itself in every matter having relation to the X-rays; and its secretary, Mr. E. Payne of Hatchlands, Chicksfield, Sussex,

is always ready to afford inquirers information as to its aims and doings. The committee are now anxious to accumulate facts relative to the alleged injuries which result from continued application of the rays—burning of the skin, shedding of the nails, &c.—and they are appealing to medical men who work with the X-rays for information on the subject. With this view they have prepared a series of questions, so that the information may be collected in convenient form. Copies of these will be gladly sent to any medical man or other worker with the X-ray apparatus who may be acquainted with a case of injury of which he is willing to give particulars.

DEEP-SEA FISHING.

Prince Albert of Monaco has for the past fifteen years made oceanography his hobby, and the paper which he read the other day before the Royal Geographical Society describing his experiences was full of interest. Commencing with a little sailing-schooner of 200 tons, he replaced it in 1890 by a stronger vessel of 560 tons; and now a far larger one is being built for him by Messrs Laird of Liverpool, in which he hopes to continue his researches. Much of his work has consisted in collecting specimens of marine creatures from depths sometimes as great as 1600 fathoms. He used the trawl, and also huge traps made of wood and netting, big enough to hold four or five people. These he would bait with such delicacies as salt-fish, sheep's offal, the heads and claws of fowls, &c.; and, strange to say, these baits are more attractive to certain marine creatures if soaked in a sauce made of asafœtida. One difficulty he met with in the fact that the larger prisoners devoured the smaller ones, and he obviated this by making refuge-traps of small size within the big trap. But occasionally the bigger prisoners found their match in the small crustacea, on one occasion a large dogfish being reduced to a mere bag of skin, its soft parts, muscles and tendons, weighing at least nine pounds, being completely devoured during the twenty hours which the trap remained sunk at the bottom of the water. These traps were sunk like lobster-pots, with a buoy attached so that they could easily be recovered. Many interesting creatures were brought up by this means which would otherwise have remained undiscovered. Bright objects, such as fragments of looking-glass, were hung to the trap, and seemed to attract the marine creatures; and on more than one occasion a good haul resulted from the employment at night of the electric light.

A NEW FUEL.

A new fuel has been introduced in the form of petroleum briquettes, made by a process known as Kuhlows. Petroleum refuse is mixed with ten per cent. soda lye and a like quantity of tallow or any fatty matter, the whole being intimately

mixed by constant stirring, and heated by steam to a temperature short of the boiling-point of petroleum. Incipient saponification takes place, and in this state the plastic mass is capable of taking up a quantity of fluid rock oil, after which addition the mass is allowed to cool, and is run into moulds. For certain uses coal-dust, sawdust, or other refuse can with advantage be added to the compound, or the grease can be replaced by resinous substances. The resulting product is described as a cheap and very convenient form of fuel.

AN ICE-BREAKING VESSEL.

There was lately launched from the shipyard of Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth, & Co. a vessel which, although only a couple of hundred feet long, is of more than ordinary interest. It is an ice-breaker, and its particular mission is to keep open the port of Hango for the Russian government at that time of year when it is generally ice-bound. Former ice-breakers have been built with a long, cut-away bow, so that, partly by speed and partly by forcing the weight of the vessel above the ice, the obstruction has given way under repeated attacks. The new boat is designed to work upon a totally different principle. It has two propellers, one in the ordinary position, and the other forward, the object of the latter being to give the water under the ice a high sternward velocity, so that the ice is left without support. Then comes the bow of the vessel with its heavy, crushing action, and breaks through with comparative ease. The vessel is being fitted with two sets of triple expansion engines, which are of special design so as to fit them for the heavy work which they have to accomplish.

AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE.

A great advance in telephonic communication is indicated in the introduction from America of the automatic exchange, by which device a subscriber can put himself into direct communication with any one else on the system without the help of an intermediary. The automatic instrument at once dispenses with the large staff of skilled assistants which is necessary for the old system of exchange, and a further advantage is that the utmost secrecy is maintained. It would not be possible to describe the clever mechanism by which these results are brought about without the assistance of complicated drawings. It will be sufficient to say that each subscriber has attached to his instrument a disc pivoted at the centre, and bearing the figures 0 to 9. Supposing that he wishes to speak to a neighbour whose number is 624. He will insert his finger in a hole opposite the figure 6, pull round the disc, and do the same in succession with the other two figures 2 and 4. This action connects him with No. 624, and he is at liberty

to talk to the subscriber represented by that number. When the conversation is finished he hangs the receiver on its hook, and the switches which his previous action put in motion return to their normal position. A large number of installations on this principle have been at work for some time in the United States, and are stated to have given great satisfaction to the subscribers. The system is being introduced in this country by the Direct Telephone Exchange Company, who have fitted up a model installation at Winchester House, London, E.C.

TEA-CULTIVATION IN CHINA.

According to the consular report from Foochow, the cultivation of tea in that district has ceased to be remunerative, and the export is now but one-third of what it was twenty years ago. No reason is given for this decline in the industry, and we are left to assume that it is caused partly by the competition of India and Ceylon, and possibly in part by the discovery of certain tricks of trade at which the heathen Chinese is an adept. But whatever the reasons may be, much land formerly devoted to tea is now going out of cultivation, and the curing-houses are being offered for sale to the missionaries. The report in question tells us that the export trade is of great importance to China, for the internal demand for tea is not great. The majority are content with a brew from tea-dust; and when tea is not readily available, other leaves take its place. Here in Britain the consumption of tea is about six pounds per head of the population, but in China it is only half that, even among the small fraction of the people who are tea-drinkers.

A NAILLESS HORSE-SHOE.

One of the most recent novelties, which will, we think, be welcomed as a boon to horse-keepers as well as the animals under their charge, is a shoe patented by Mr R. McDougall of Wellington Street, Glasgow, which can be affixed to the hoof without nails. The new shoe takes the familiar form, but has two projections, one on each side at the back, which engage rings at the ends of a band which passes over the front of the hoof, and is fastened in the middle by a screw attachment to the centre of the shoe. The entire arrangement is simple, and the innovation means that when a horse casts a shoe it will not be necessary any longer to seek the aid of a farrier, for the new shoe can easily be fitted in a few minutes by an inexperienced hand. In a recent trial of the nailless horse-shoes the new invention was put to a severe test—the horse on which the shoes were fitted being attached to a heavy-laden van and worked up and down steep gradients and on granite-paved streets. Notwithstanding this rough work the shoes showed no sign of shifting, and were not removed until worn out. The new shoe obviates all risk of pricking or

laming by nails, and a slight rasping of the hoof is all that is required in attaching it to its bed.

THE TSAR IN PROVERB.

The Tsar (oddly enough spelt by us *Czar*) plays a still more prominent part in Russian proverbs than the king does elsewhere. Some of the following are not peculiar to Russia: 'The crown doesn't save the Tsar from headache'; 'The Tsar may be the cousin of God Almighty, but he isn't just His brother'; 'The voice of the Tsar makes an echo even when there are no mountains near'; 'One tear in the eye of the Tsar costs the country many handkerchiefs'; 'If the Tsar takes to writing poetry, God pity the poets!'; 'Time accomplishes what even the Tsar can't do'; 'Even the Tsar's cow can only produce calves'; 'If the Tsar takes smallpox, all the country has the poek-marks'; 'If the Tsar gives you an egg, he expects at least a hen in return for it.'

THE PRESERVATION OF EGGS.

Many are the plans which have from time to time been published for preserving eggs in a fresh state; but, judging from the quality of what are commonly known as 'shop eggs,' it would seem that there is still much to learn in this department of domestic economy. The director of the Agricultural School at Neisse, in Germany, has lately published the results of certain experiments which he has made in this direction; and a record of them will, we feel certain, be useful to many of our readers. Eggs kept in brine for seven months had not turned bad, but were so saturated with salt as to be quite unpalatable. After this first observation we are given a list of some twenty experiments with various agents, with the percentage of eggs spoilt in each during a seven months' probationary period. These are as follows: Kept in solution of salicylic acid and glycerine, 80; rubbed with salt, 70; packed in bran, 70; coated with paraffin wax, 70; immersed in boiling-water for from twelve to fifteen seconds, 50; solution of alum, 50; solution of salicylic acid, 50; coated with soluble glass, 40; collodion, 40; varnish, 40; rubbed with bacon fat, 30; packed in wood ashes, 20; boric acid and soluble glass, 20; potass permanganate, 20; coated with vasoline and kept in lime-water, *all good*; kept in soluble glass, *all very good*. It is curious that the experimenter makes no mention of a plan which is adopted by the French, by which it is said eggs can be kept in good condition for two years. They melt by heat four ounces of beeswax in eight ounces of olive-oil, dip the eggs in the warm liquid, wipe them, and store them in powdered charcoal in a cool situation. Another system, known as the British Egg Storage Patent, has been introduced by Mr. C. A. Christianson, Bernard Street, Leith. He discovered, after a trial of seven years, that eggs must not be enclosed in

any substance, but allowed to be apart in a perpendicular position, the narrow point downwards, so that the air in the warehouse enclosed each individual egg. The position of the eggs was, however, altered every second day. This is accomplished by the simple turning of a lever, which keeps the yolk in its natural position embedded in the albumen. Some eggs have been tested which were under the process for fourteen months, and they were found quite good.

SUMMER'S MELODY.

Oh! picture to yourself a scene like this:
The silent river gliding 'tween its banks,
Each lovely floweret drooping low to kiss
Its cooling surface, in its grateful thanks
For all the strengthening moisture it doth yield;
Whilst, glittering in the sunlight's glorious sheen,
The sweet corn turning to a golden brown;
The verdant meadows covered o'er with green;
The gay lark singing, soaring up and down,
And sailing over coppice, pool, and field;
The mighty forest kings—the elm and oak,
The silvery birch, the stately pine, the beech—
Clothed in the glory of their leafy cloak,
All raise their towering heads as though to preach
Their Heavenly Maker's glory, praise, and care;
Whilst lowing cattle, grazing at their ease,
And feathered songsters singing forth their praise,
The very hearts of men, so hard to please,
Seem glad, as they their thankful voices raise,
And in one song of gladness take their share.

FRANK R. DUTTON.

THE AUGUST PART

OF

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

WILL CONTAIN THE OPENING CHAPTERS

OF A STORY ENTITLED

THE SHIP-BREAKERS:

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By T. ST. E. HAKE.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postago-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them in FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By THOMAS ST. E. HAKE.

CHAPTER I.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY'S CABIN.

IT was an autumn day. The weather at Cablethorpe was dry but gusty, and a sand-storm was driving up from the beach in whirling clouds. Cablethorpe is a small, sea-washed town on the east coast. In autumn, and still more frequently in spring, the tide has been known to flow into the High Street, rising to the very door-steps of its red brick houses, with their bow-windows and gabled roofs. This picturesque old street is almost as broad as it is long; but the narrow ways that branch out of it are unattractive, except to those in search of lodgings. They are like green shoots from a decayed trunk.

The sand-storm, fierce and penetrating, was more merciless than a storm of hail or snow. The sand flew madly into every by-path, nook, and corner. It swept under archways and into passages; it entered every shop that stood open, and sanded its floor as thickly as though it were the floor of a bar-parlour. It described a pirouette in the courtway of the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn; and it rushed across the road into the timber-yard, where it settled down in the holes and crannies between the tall piles of timber. It pattered noisily against the window-panes of the timber merchant's office, and diverted the clerks from their cash-books, invoice-books, and ledgers. With one of these clouds of sand that burst into the timber-yard a middle-aged gentleman was blown in. He was menaced and attacked on every side. He panted and fought; but the flying sand dodged round him with a constant change of front, sometimes giving him a lash in the face that threatened to blind him, and sometimes stinging him in the neck, until at last he was driven into the office.

He recovered his dignity when he had shut out the storm, and, drawing up his tall, slim figure, said, 'Is Mr Beek at home?' while wiping the sand out of his eyes with a red silk handkerchief.

No. 36.—VOL. I.

A clerk ushered the visitor into Mr Beek's office.

It was growing dusk. Mr Beek, wreck-wood merchant and ship-breaker, was occupied at his desk under a shaded lamp. He was a man of sixty, thick-set and ruddy, with a large head and short neck—a typical John Bull. The visitor walked towards one of the windows and looked out. Workmen were busily engaged loading carts with ship-wood. Near one of these carts stood a girl. She wore a blue serge dress and a red cap; and from under the cap her dark curly hair was blown about over her forehead. She was observing the workmen with interest, while Mr Beek's visitor observed her through his *pince-nez* in the gathering gloom.

'Sit down, Mr Burtenshaw,' said the ship-breaker genially, as he glanced up from his desk. 'Sit down, sir. I was rather expecting you might call to-day.'

Mr Burtenshaw, who was Mr Beek's lawyer, dropped his *pince-nez* and sat down.

'You've come about the mortgage, I presume?'

'Yes,' said Mr Burtenshaw.

Mr Beek leant back in his chair. He seemed to be waiting for some communication; but the lawyer showed no sign of being in a communicative frame of mind.

'You've had a visit from my son?' said the ship-breaker tentatively.

'Yes; he called upon me this afternoon,' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'He has put his signature to the deed. I've brought a certified copy of it with me.'

As the lawyer spoke he smiled blandly, and rising from his chair, handed Mr Beek a bulky oblong envelope, and then resumed his seat. While the ship-breaker was occupied in opening the letter Mr Burtenshaw went on:

'The document has now been signed by both of you. The Beek & Son estate—house, timber—

[All Rights Reserved.]

AUGUST 6, 1898.

yard, warehouse—has been mortgaged for the sum of three thousand pounds. I think you'll find, sir, that everything has been done in as strictly a legal form as you could wish.'

The ship-breaker turned over the pages of the duplicate mortgage-deed searchingly; after which he looked into the empty envelope, and then down upon the floor near his desk. Then he said:

'You've omitted one thing, Mr Burtenshaw.'

'Indeed, sir?'

'You've omitted to enclose the cheque.'

'Oh! That,' said Mr Burtenshaw, smiling still more blandly, 'I handed to Gabriel when he signed the document.'

'You gave the cheque to my son?'

The lawyer adjusted his *pince-nez* and looked keenly into Mr Beek's face. He thought he had detected a touch of anxiety in his client's voice. He had certainly turned redder in the face; but a man of Mr Beek's apoplectic tendency was always liable to turn all sorts of colours without any special provocation. It was perhaps mere fancy on his part. The ship-breaker uneasy about his son's honesty? He had always held him up as a model of integrity! There were men—the lawyer might be one of them—who considered Gabriel a hypocrite; who even suspected that he gambled. But that was not *his* affair. Mr Burtenshaw, having reconciled his conscience with this last thought, dropped his glasses and resignedly folded his arms.

'I gave the cheque to your son. Hasn't he come home?'

'I'm expecting him home every minute,' he said; and, as Mr Beek referred to his watch, the lawyer fancied that his hand trembled violently. 'You'll stay and dine with us?'

But Mr Burtenshaw smilingly excused himself as he rose to take his leave: 'Thank you, no; I think not. Good-night.'

When the lawyer had crossed the timber-yard and had reached the little door in the closed gateway, he paused a moment with his hand upon the latch. Then he stepped out into the High Street, and found himself once more confronted by the storm. A gust of sand whirled round him, and attacked him more fiercely than before. It came up in a blinding cloud from the shore, as though it had been lying there in wait, smote him in the face, and fled on its way.

Mr Burtenshaw found shelter over the road in a parlour at the 'Jolly Bacchus.' He walked to the window. The ship-breaker's premises stood opposite, and the lawyer contemplated them with as much interest as though they belonged to him. The moonlight touched the gateway sideways. Over this gateway there were two old ships' figure-heads. One was a weather-beaten admiral, who stared at the sign of the 'Bacchus' with a stony stare; and the other was a buxom mermaid, who directed her gaze toward the sea. The one seemed to have a longing for water, the other for wine. A

red brick house adjoined the premises. The lawyer rang the bell. A brisk old man, with so many deep wrinkles on his face that it was a puzzle to every one how he managed to keep so clean-shaved, came in.

'A glass of sherry, Mumby! And be smart about it,' said Mr Burtenshaw in a bullying tone, 'for my time's precious. Hurry up my horse and gig, will you? I never knew such a slow lot.'

Mumby had been boots at the 'Bacchus' when Mr Burtenshaw was a young man, and he had grown to regard the lawyer's insults as marks of distinction. The horse and gig were presently brought round. Mr Burtenshaw was soon in his place; and in another minute he had started off at full speed along the flat fenland road towards the town of Alford. For some little distance a cloud of sand came chasing after him. But when he had passed Cablethorpe Church, an isolated Norman edifice that stood half a mile from the town and was surrounded by dikes, he got free of sandy annoyances. On he went, spinning on his way through village after village. It was a brilliant night. The moon, nearly at its full, had mounted high overhead into a cloudless sky. The country on all sides was like a wide, almost limitless heath, with clumps of trees and sheltered homesteads at distant intervals. It was a vast playground for the wind. Gust after gust fled over it with scarcely less bluster than out at sea. Mr Burtenshaw, with his rug tucked closely round him, and his broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat pulled down over his brow, urged his horse into a quicker trot as he glanced over his shoulder with a grim smile.

At the moment that lawyer Burtenshaw started from the 'Jolly Bacchus' the clang of the workmen's bell in Beek & Son's premises broke upon the night. The workmen speedily dispersed; and presently the only person left in the timber-yard was the girl whom Mr Burtenshaw had observed from the window of Mr Beek's office. She was stepping over a pile of timber in the moonlight, and her pretty face and lithe figure suggested an elf of the forest in which this ship-wood had been cut down. The girl was still balancing herself along a narrow plank, when the doorway in the gates was hastily opened, and a young fellow stood before her. He looked a jovial, weather-beaten man, who had brought with him some of the breeziness and brine of the sea. He was cordially greeted by the girl.

'Why, Mr Tudway—Ted, I mean,' said she, laughingly—'where did you spring from?'

'London; and I'm going back to-night.'

'So soon?'

'Yes. But see here, Hettie,' said he, plunging his hand into a side-pocket; 'I've a letter from your brother Gabriel. I met him on the road. The letter is for your father. Let me give it you before I forget.'

'From Gabriel?'

There was still a light in the ship-breaker's office. But all the clerks were gone, except the manager, who was seated over a big ledger.

'Is father in his room, Jarvis?' said Hettie, looking in; and, receiving an answer in the affirmative, she opened her father's door.

Mr Beek was seated at his desk, with his head resting thoughtfully on his hand. He had not heard Hettie's step, and as she approached he gave a slight start and looked up.

'What is it, my dear?'

'Gabriel;' and she gave him the letter.

As Hettie was going out—she had just put her hand upon the latch—she thought her father called her, and she looked round.

'Did you speak?'

His eyes were bent upon the letter.

'No.' And he went on reading.

Hettie was not satisfied, for she thought that she detected a change in her father's face.

'There's nothing the matter, father?'

'The matter? Dear me, no!'—he threw down the letter and took up his pen to resume his work—'nothing—nothing.'

Still Hettie was not satisfied. As she passed through the clerks' office she stopped at the manager's desk and whispered, 'I believe there's bad news in that letter,' and she jerked her head in the direction of her father's room. 'Will you try and find out, Jarvis?' and then she stepped out into the yard.

Tudway was seated on a pile of timber waiting for her.

'Is it true,' said he, looking about him, 'that your father has bought my uncle's old schooner *Nancy*?'

'Quite true.'

'Is he going to break her up,' said he, 'and sell her as ship-wood?'

Hettie laughed. 'Of course! Isn't it our trade?'

Tudway again looked about him. 'Where is she lying?'

'High and dry,' replied Hettie, 'on Cablethorpe sands.'

'I'd like to overhaul her, Hettie. Will you walk there?'

The tide was running in fast over the flat, sandy beach when Hettie Beek, accompanied by Tudway, came in sight of the old hulk. It had already been stripped of some of its timber. It lay at the water's edge, leaning, meditatively as it were, on its starboard side; and the waves that were leaping up and flinging feathery spray against its rudderless stern seemed to be inviting it sportively on another voyage.

Down here on the open coast, where the potent gusts of wind had full play, the flying sand from the dunes stung the faces of this young couple with pitiless force. Hettie soon found herself compelled to shut her eyes and cling firmly to

Tudway's arm. Tudway fought against the storm; but he made slow progress, for he frequently had to stop and look into Hettie's face and assure himself that she did not wish to turn back. They got under the sheltering side of the hulk at last, and Tudway ran up the ladder that leant against the bulwark, not forgetting to give Hettie his hand. They reached the deck together. It sloped considerably, so Tudway ventured to retain the girl's hand until he had landed her safely at the aft-cabin door.

The aft-cabin of Captain Tudway's old ship was large and semicircular in shape. There was a window on each side, and a shelf for a berth under each window. Hettie seated herself upon one of these, while Tudway stood near her looking round him with lively interest. A soft glimmer of moonlight was on the sea.

'Just as I remember her,' said Tudway, 'when a boy! How often I have seen my Uncle Tudway, in his seafaring days, seated where you are now! It was his favourite corner. How often he has sat there smoking his old pipe and spinning yarns by the score! By the bye,' he added, tapping the woodwork as he spoke, 'I've a good mind to make your father a bid for this old cabin. The timber would make a summer-house—wouldn't it? I don't like the thought of its being sold as ship-wood by auction in so many lots.'

'Going—going—gone!' laughed Hettie.

Tudway sat down beside her. 'Hettie,' said he, 'I'm off to London to-night to bid my old uncle good-bye. I have come to-day to take leave of you.'

Hettie's face grew serious. 'When do you sail?'

'My ship, the *Seagull*, leaves the Thames,' said Tudway, 'at daybreak to-morrow. I am going on a long voyage. It may be months before I see you again. When I come back, Hettie, you'll be my wife, won't you?'

'I don't know.'

'Don't know, Hettie?'

'I—I *do* like you, Ted. But,' said she hesitatingly—'but wouldn't it be wiser to ask me that question when you come back?'

'Hettie! Can you doubt me?'

'No. I doubt myself.'

There was a pause. 'There's nobody else, Hettie, is there?'

'Oh no!'

'What is it, then?'

The girl looked out over the sea. Her lips moved, as though she were trying how to frame her reply. Presently she said, 'Father's business is in a bad way. Would you marry a penniless girl?'

'Wouldn't I! Why, you know it makes no difference to me,' said Tudway, 'whether you're rich or poor.'

'I'm sure of it. But it's only fair to tell you,

Ted, that my father is not so prosperous as he was a year ago.'

'I'm sorry for that.'

'I knew you would be. His affairs are in such a muddle, Ted, that I hardly know where we shall be when you return. Would you speak to me,' said Hettie, with irresistible laughter in her voice, 'if I stopped you in the streets of London with a basket of violets on my arm?'

'Hettie!'

'You would buy a bunch, dear—wouldn't you?'

'Don't make a joke of it, Hettie!'

'How can I help it?' And yet there were tears gathering in her laughing eyes. 'I have been thinking so much about the business lately. I wonder if I should trouble my head about timber and wages and such prosy things, Ted, if I really loved you?'

They walked homeward. A glittering path of moonlight stretched across the sea. The waves

rolled over their own changeful lights and shadows along the flat, sandy waste with the incoming tide. But though these waves leapt high, sending their white foam flying inland with the sand, they fell with no angry sound. On a rocky coast there would have been, on such a windy night, an incessant and deafening roar. It was only when the tide was at its highest—when the waves crashed against the breakwaters that saved the fenlands from being swamped—that the sea at Cablethorpe made its voice loudly heard.

Hettie Beck, in the goodness of her heart, felt pity for Tudway. She liked him well enough, if she did not love him; and the manly effort which he made to hide his disappointment roused her sympathy. She was disinclined to wish him 'good-bye' when they reached the High Street. She asked rather humbly, 'May I come with you to the station, Ted?' and she only took leave of him when the train started on its way to London.

IRISH HOME INDUSTRIES.—POINT LACE.

By MARY GORGES.

THE Textile Exhibition of last year in Dublin, at the time of the Duke and Duchess of York's visit, was a veritable inspiration. Nothing so convincing could have been done 'to dispel the myth that the Irishman is constitutionally an idler, and that the Irish can do nothing of themselves.' For here was the evidence of their aptitude for work, and of eager yet patient industry which had toiled on, almost unrecognised, for years. Ireland owes this great and timely help to Lady Cadogan; and truly from many a heart came the involuntary 'God bless her!' at the sight of the many strangers who, pleased and surprised, crowded round the various exhibits at the Textile Exhibition, often entering into interested conversation with the exhibitors, and receiving information which totally upset preconceived ideas of Ireland and its people.

Out of all the industries exhibited I single that of lace-work for a brief account, partly because it is rapidly attaining—like Irish poplin—the rank of a speciality; and also because nothing so displays the deftness, taste, and artistic skill of Irishwomen. Those who can remember its beginnings have a deep and pathetic interest, not unmingled with pride, in now beholding its results.

And first let me take that 'queen of Irish laces,' the Irish Point, made only in the south of Ireland. This exquisite, filmy fabric is so beautiful as to have called forth deep and genuine admiration from the Queen, and her especial thanks to the workers as well as to the donors of the valuable lace shawl presented to her by

the ladies of the Irish Industries Association. Who, looking at it, could connect this costly and artistic product with a few pale, poverty-stricken children gathered into a convent school in the terrible years of the famine (1847–1850) to be taught fine needlework as some resource against starvation? Yet this was the beginning from which sprang the now famous Irish Point.

Mother Magdalen Gould of the Presentation Convent, Youghal, was doing all that she could for the poor at this crisis; till, when every resource was exhausted, the idea occurred to another nun, Mother Mary Anne Smith, of teaching the poor children an industrial occupation. She had a piece of 'Point de Milan,' which she carefully unravelled and examined stitch by stitch, until she discovered how it had been made. Then she selected those of the convent children who had shown a taste for fine needlework, and taught them separately what she had just learned. So great was their aptitude, and so rapidly did the number of workers increase, that the convent lace school had to be opened in 1852.

Let it not be supposed that this lace is simply an imitation of the Italian model. At first the stitches were few; but with time and practice some hundred new ones have been invented, and these so complicated that it is almost impossible to rip them; consequently this lace, which looks light as gossamer, has great durability, and grows more valuable with the lapse of time. It stands wear and tear, and can be washed and made up without detriment. It is often compared to the finest old Brussels Point, which it more nearly

resembles now than the Italian Point, from which it sprang. But, what between the number of new stitches invented by the lace-makers, the variety of the designs, and the perfection to which the work has been brought, the Irish Point has a right to its name as an original fabric, though 'it only came into existence as an Irish industry within living memory.'

It is made entirely with the needle, and demands the greatest skill and care. The finest is very costly, rising to £80 a yard for deep flounces, £30 for a handkerchief, and £50 for a fan.

An exquisite fan which was presented to the Duchess of York on her marriage by Lord Crewe was bought at the Irish Lace Dépôt, Grafton Street, Dublin, a most important agency for Irish needlework of all kinds, and one of which I must say a few words at the close of this article; for there I have seen some of the choicest specimens of lace, embroidery, and other work, and heard many details of their production. There too I found that, costly as Irish Point can be, yet fan, flounce, or handkerchief may be had at from twenty shillings.

It must be confessed that Rose Point, or Inishmacsaint work, runs the 'queen of Irish laces,' the Irish Point of the south, a very close second. It is an exquisite fabric, at once delicate and rich.

Its origin as an industry also dates from that landmark of desolation in Irish history, the great famine, and from the efforts made by resident ladies to create remunerative employment for the girls living around them. Perceiving how quick they were to learn the use of the needle, they collected them into classes and taught them crochet-work, embroidery, and lace-making. Many stories could be written of these efforts, and of the various industries which originated from them; but I must confine myself to telling that of the lace next in importance to the Irish Point.

Mrs Maclean, wife of the rector of Tynan, county Armagh, was the teacher of this Rose, or Raised, Point (*punto in aria* is the term for the tiny 'brides,' or links, which join its sprays together); and the same thought which prompted Mother Mary Smith to unravel her 'Point de Milan' till she found out the secret of the stitches, caused Mrs Maclean to carefully examine the torn part of a piece of Venetian Rose Point which she possessed, until, after patient search, she too discovered the art, and taught it to some of the poor girls around, both teacher and workers patiently toiling on till the various stitches were perfectly understood. The first flounces made at Tynan were exhibited in London in 1851, and purchased by the Primate of Ireland. But, on the death of the Rev. William Maclean, the centre of the work was changed to county Fermanagh in 1865. And there, on the lovely shores of Lough Erne, do the girls carry on to this day the work taught them by Miss Maclean, who went to live there with her sister, Mrs Tottenham, after the breaking up of the home in Tynan. A late writer

on this subject (Miss D. Roberts) testifies that they are always improving, glad of old patterns from ladies who possess family lace, and very quick to follow out the designs and instructions of the teachers connected with South Kensington.

Inishmacsaint gives its name to the parish and the lace. It means 'Isle of the Sorrel Plain.' And by the white strand opposite the isle, or 'inish,' live the 'bright-eyed, neat-handed girls' whom the writer mentioned above first saw sitting outside their cottages 'in the full light of day, seeming to create the fairy-like fabric without any strain to the eyes, though the work is so minute that it takes some time to make four-inch square of the lace.' The same lady compared with this the modern Venetian Point-lace, with the result of finding the Inishmacsaint much finer and more beautiful than the modern Venetian Rose Point, which she had the opportunity of examining at Venice and in the schools established by the Queen of Italy on the island of Murano, in the Venetian lagoons, for carrying on the making of old Venice lace, once of world-wide fame. The old Venetian Rose Point is very costly, and while the Rose Point made by the shores of Lough Erne quite equals it, the price is about a third of that given for the Italian lace.

This industry no longer depends on private patronage. Two of the lace-makers were sent by the late Mr Lindsay, 76 Grafton Street, Dublin (Irish Lace Dépôt), to the School of Art in Dublin, that they might there learn to draw and design. And ever since this establishment has given constant employment to the Irish girls, who toil so patiently and lovingly at this beautiful product.

And now one word as to this Irish Lace Dépôt, an agency worked by seven directors, wholly for the benefit of the workers—the directors, of whom Lady Aberdeen is president, receiving, of course, no emolument. The capital of the company is in debentures, and no dividend is paid to any shareholder. All productions of lace-work, embroideries, crochet, tatting, &c. are taken at the Irish Lace Dépôt, whose representatives pay prompt cash and find a market for the goods in the United Kingdom. When workers are poor they make advances to sustain them while the work is being done; often, indeed, the full price is paid before it is received, and how much that sometimes means to the poor! An idea of the good that is done by this company may be gathered from the amount of wages paid annually to the workers, which is upwards of £12,000. And it is the intention, when the debentures are cleared off, to devote the profits to the workers who have made the goods, so that practically it will be a great co-operative concern.

This society sends first-class teachers, when desired, to the various districts, and all over Ireland women have learned to do work which brings them comfort and independence, keeping the roof over their heads in many instances.

Having begun by mentioning Lady Cadogan's

Textile Exhibition as having been a veritable inspiration of great and timely help to Ireland, I cannot close without a word concerning Lady Aberdeen, without whom this lace exhibition could never have taken place. It was Lady Aberdeen's interest and personal efforts which gave the impetus that made it possible. It was she who organised the Irish Industries Association, and by extensive orders introduced various kinds of Irish lace in quarters where it had been previously unknown—for instance, at the World's Fair at Chicago, where it was greatly admired, over £500 worth of orders being executed for this exhibition of one kind only (Kinsale lace); while everywhere in Ireland a declining tendency was checked and fresh heart and courage infused by the kind heart, the quick eye, and the clever

brain that had come to the help of the poor workers. Lady Aberdeen saw exactly what was wanted to place the struggling industries on a firm footing, and spared neither time, trouble, nor expense in securing good designs and skilled artistic training for the workers. And Ireland does not forget this, and that it is to Lady Aberdeen she owes her late crowning hour of recognition in Lady Cadogan's Textile Exhibition.

In later articles I hope to notice Irish poplin, the Carrickmacross industry, Limerick, and other lace. Here I will only remark in conclusion that Irishwomen have developed positive genius (of head and hand) in the making of lace, and that the marvellous cleanliness with which the merest peasant keeps her handiwork often puts to shame the work done in a drawing-room.

TOWARDS THE SUNRISE.

A TALE OF RUSSIAN JEWRY.

By SAMUEL GORDON, Author of *A Hundred of Exotics, In Years of Transition, &c.*

CHAPTER I.



AFTER bestowing both his parents in the grave and his only sister in marriage, Judah Engelsohn was free to do as he pleased. The rent he derived from the dairy-farm he had inherited from his father, late factor to Count Gribalski, the great landowner, provided him with comfortable if not over-affluent means of subsistence; and so he said good-bye to the four-footed ruminators who, together with their predecessors, had engaged the first twenty-three years of his life, and came to Warsaw.

There was a special reason why he chose the Polish capital for his place of abode. Into his boyhood's hermitage there had come from time to time vague echoes, faint after-quieters of the great upheaval that was stirring his people, dazed with suffering, out of their millennial torpor. By-and-by these rumours had changed into tidings of certainty. His soul caught fire: he longed to be present at the awakening, to add his shout to those that were bidding the sleeper arise and array himself once more in the glory of which he had been stripped by the despoiling centuries. And Judah felt it would be base and criminal to remain longer where he was, thrust away out of sight of, out of touch with, his fellows in faith, in the solitude where one remembered, only by a miracle, or at best by an accident, that one belonged to a great race and a great destiny.

Judah had no acquaintances in Warsaw; he brought, however, a letter of introduction to Uriah Vilenski, the *doyen* of the Jewish Students' Association. On the second day after his arrival Judah called on Vilenski.

'So you have come here because you want to help Zion?' asked the latter, after the usual preliminaries of identification, looking curiously at his visitor. 'What can you do?'

'I don't know yet,' replied Judah. 'How can I tell when I am ignorant of what there remains to be done?'

'Everything,' said Vilenski. 'We have got as far as the beginning. We want men to help us further. I don't know—you might be one of them. Have you learnt anything? You speak Russian remarkably well.'

'The tutor of the young counts gave me three hours a week,' said Judah simply. 'I can read Cicero; I have a fair knowledge of French and German, and a tolerable notion of the questions of the day. These are my accomplishments. I have but one natural talent—my love for Zion.'

'That is always welcome—even reckoned as an acquirement,' broke in Vilenski. 'And that is where your work should lie. You should utilise your talent—and impart it to others.'

Judah looked up quickly. 'I do not ask for anything better. I could not ask for anything easier. Nothing could be easier in this great city, where every third man I meet is linked to me by the memory of Jerusalem's ruins. I shall make them listen to me. I shall go to them one after another and say'—

'A sort of roving commission,' interrupted Vilenski, smilingly. 'No, friend; we are more methodical than that. Listen; there are about a dozen of us. We call ourselves the "Kadima." We have forsworn the seeking of wealth and earthly honours, and all who would be of us must

do the same. We are pledged to Zion, body and soul. While our pulses are capable of a throb, while our minds can fashion a thought, we shall toil in her service. She needs many such toilers, many such servitors. I think you would be a valuable recruit. Will you join us?'

Judah gazed silently at the floor. 'Kadima?' he said at last, half to himself. 'That means eastward—towards the sunrise. Yes, that is where we should be tending—thither where our new day is breaking, where the shadows will be afraid to follow us. It will be sweet to have a little sunshine again; we have shivered long enough with the cold. And then you ask me if I would be one of those to lead the way? I beg it of you as a privilege. Eastward—ay, ever eastward!'

And so it came that Judah joined the Kadima; but no, he did not—the Kadima joined him. He had been a little unjust to his natal star in the enumeration of his congenital gifts. The discovery surprised him as much as the others. At the first meeting of the Kadima he attended, he had risen to his feet to offer some trivial suggestion. He had thought that a few well-turned sentences would be enough to give it expression, but a quarter of an hour afterwards he was still standing up, still speaking; for, to save his life, he could not check the flow of eloquence that came surging up from his heart's depths, taking to itself, with every second breath, fresh scope and volume, widening out into majestic eddies of sweeping argument, and anon contracting itself into whirlpools of passionate fervour. He was unconscious of his gape-mouthed audience; he was not addressing them—he was speaking to himself. These were the culminations of his night vigils, the thoughts and feelings his heart had accumulated these many years, cramping them up, hoarding them jealously till there was no more storage-room. And therefore he spoke, because his words were to him as the air of heaven to a choking man.

When he sat down there was a momentous silence, followed by a short whispered consultation among the members, and presently Vilenski came up to him.

'We cannot let you work with us,' he said.

'Why—why not?' queried Judah, taken aback.

'You are too good for us—too strong for us. And therefore, if we are to act in concert, let us work with you. You are a stranger in our midst—a mere probationer—and already you have shown that you can do in minutes what we could not do in years. We have men amongst us who have given up the marrow of their youth, the sinews of their manhood, in our mission; none more so than I. But we must stand aside. If this work is to be achieved, the lesser of us must make way for the greater ungrudgingly, without murmur or complaint. Only the best shall hold command. Be our general; let us follow under your banner.'

That was how the Kadima joined Judah. Nor

was it long before his fame had trickled out beyond its narrow confines. Whenever he was seen on the Nalevkas, in the street of the Franciscans, or anywhere within the pulicus where the teeming thousands of his co-religionists congregated, men gazed and pointed after him: 'There goes Judah Engelsohn.' And every one who noted the massive, lion-like head with the broad thinker's forehead and the fearless eyes—every one who watched the towering frame striding erect and resolute through their midst as though nothing could deflect it from its path or purpose, added to himself: 'Yes, I thought he would look like that.'

Some six months afterwards Judah had occasion to call on Vilenski to consult with him on business connected with their association. His friend was out, but was expected back shortly. Judah decided to await his return. Vilenski's room was on the second floor, and overlooked the court formed by the four blocks of buildings that flanked its sides. Judah sat down by the window and gazed out vacantly. The square was deserted; the men—artisans most of them—had gone to their work; the women were cooking; the children were in school. Suddenly Judah heard the front gate shut with a clang, and a moment after Ivan, the red-headed *concierge*, came staggering into the middle of the court. Judah saw at a glance that the man had drunk heavily, but he did not know what had brought the cunning, murderous look into his eyes, or what he concealed so sedulously under his jacket. The fact was that this happened to be Ivan's saint's-day, and, as usual, he observed it by drinking himself into *delirium tremens*. Now, even in his most rational and charitable moments, Ivan could not forgive his wife for not being some one else's wife; and when in his present condition he always did his best to rectify her mistake by attempting to make himself a widower. He was sure she was in hiding somewhere about the adjoining premises, and was standing sentry here, waiting for her to appear down one of the staircases. The tenants were not much concerned; they knew that Ivan's wife had gone to fetch the police, and that in five minutes the danger would be over.

Judah watched the man attentively; there was food for reflection in the spectacle. Whatever reproach their detractors might hurl against his brothers, their malice could not go as far as this. They could not taunt them with effacing from their countenances, as this brute had done, the image of the God who made them; there might be a few—ah! but it was those few that saved the many. Judah bent forward; the drunkard was standing on the alert—some one was descending. Yes, a young girl stepped out, veiled and richly dressed; evidently she did not belong to any of the tenant families. For a moment she stood wondering at the strange sight that

met her gaze. Ivan began to stumble towards her; he had heard the rustle of skirts, and that was enough to convince him he had his wife to deal with. Then, as the girl realised her danger, she screamed, and darted past him to gain the gateway. A glance showed her it was closed, and there would not be enough time to undo the bars. She turned back, but by now the ruffian had intercepted her way back into the court square. To the left of her was a little door. Judah just gave himself time to see her disappear behind it, when he rushed down, five steps at a time. Ivan's hand had moved under his doublet, and there had been a glitter of steel. Judah knew that the door led to a bricked-up flight of stairs, at the top of which the girl would be caught in an *impasse*; he himself had blundered into it on his first visit. He reached it just as Ivan's foot was on the threshold, hauled him back by the collar, jerked the knife from his nerveless grasp, and sent him spinning into a convenient puddle. It was all the work of a moment.

'You can come down now,' called Judah; 'there is no danger.'

The girl appeared almost immediately; her face showed very white under her veil, but otherwise her demeanour was calm. She cast a shuddering glance at Ivan, who had sat up, propped on his elbow, and whimpering piteously.

'Thank you,' she said quietly as she saw Judah forcing back the heavy bolts of the gate; and Judah did not know whether she thanked him for saving her life or only for procuring her egress. He took it to mean both.

'May I escort you home?' he asked diffidently. 'You are probably a little shaken by this unpleasant incident.'

'Yes, do come,' she said cordially. 'My father will naturally want to acknowledge his obligation to you. He would scold me did I not bring you.'

Judah hailed a fiacre. His companion gave an address, and Judah wondered not a little as he heard it. Indeed, he wondered so much that he thought his ears had deceived him. It was a long drive, and for the most part a silent one; but Judah found enough pastime in studying her face. It was a very pleasant study. And then he started wondering afresh as the vehicle pulled up outside a huge mansion in the Praga suburb. He knew to whom it belonged. So he had not made a mistake? It was indeed the daughter of Heinrich Kronemann, the great banker, the greatest Jew in Warsaw, whom he had saved from a terrible fate!

A minute or two after he was sitting in a magnificent saloon; he waited a little, and then the door opened for the banker and his daughter.

'You are the hero?' said the former, striving to be jocular; but the trembling in his voice and the moisture in his eyes belied the attempt. 'I have many millions of roubles—I can't help people

knowing the fact,' he continued—'but I have only one child. How can I repay you?'

'By saving me the trouble of answering you with commonplaces,' said Judah, grasping the banker's proffered hand; 'one can appreciate gratitude better when it is unspoken.'

'There is something in that,' replied the banker thoughtfully. 'The least then I can do is to honour your wish, Mr'—

'Engelsohn,' completed Judah.

'It would be easy to pun on the name under the circumstances,' said Kronemann. Then he turned to his daughter, and his tone became more animated. 'As usual, it is your fault that I find myself in a predicament. I gave you strict orders not to perform these *incognito* charitable exploits of yours unaccompanied. I warned you you would play the good Samaritan once too often, and come to a bad end.'

'Annette has a cold, and the people were starving,' answered the girl. 'Besides'—

'Yes, besides?'

'One may be disobedient in a good cause.'

'That sounds horribly Jesuitical, you little rebel,' said her father, tapping her cheek smilingly, 'but my head is not fit just now for unmasking the fallacy. I'll do something more simple—I shall ask Mr Engelsohn to stop to lunch.'

Judah did not answer immediately. Something told him not to accept—a sense of danger which had already begun to possess him towards the end of their drive, and which gained fuel at the prospect of spending more time in the girl's immediate presence. He felt ashamed of his apprehension—as much as if he had uttered it aloud—it was so puerile; and therefore, to spare his self-respect, he translated it into the necessity of seeing Vilenski. He told his would-be host he had an appointment.

'I am exceedingly sorry,' said Kronemann heartily; 'but I hope you will give me another opportunity of cultivating your acquaintance. Bertha, will you as hostess ask Mr Engelsohn to call again?'

'For her sins?' smiled Judah.

But from the tone and manner of her invitation it did not appear that Bertha regarded it in the light of a penance.

'Would you please leave your card?' she said shyly. 'You may want a reminder.'

Judah handed it to her, feeling he had ceded a bulwark of his safety. Once back in the street he drew a breath of relief. Now that he was alone with himself he need not conceal what it was he feared. He did not want to come under a woman's spell—fall in love, as it was commonly called; he had heard that was the most terrible accident that could happen to a man. To love Kronemann's daughter? For Judah Engelsohn that would be an irreparable disaster. He must keep mastery over his emotions. He had his work to do—work that should be done well.

Vilenski was awaiting him anxiously; he had been given a confused account of what had occurred.

'Do you know who she is?' he asked when he had heard the true version.

'I will tell you on condition that no one else knows,' said Judah—'Bertha Kronemann.'

'What! *the*?—'

Judah nodded.

It took Vilenski a full minute to recover his breath.

'And you say that as quietly as if it were the name of your washerwoman?' he shouted.

'Am I to go into hysterics?'

'Why, man,' continued Vilenski eagerly, 'can't you read the stars? Don't you grasp the possibilities? You have free access to Heinrich Kronemann; you have eloquence enough to talk a fossil into life. If you can convert him to us we can boldly, safely, write "Victory" on our standard.'

'I have thought of that myself,' replied Judah a little coldly. 'Possibly I may make the attempt. I really don't know whether I shall ever call there again.'

Vilenski stared at him stupefied, but he asked no questions. He had learned to look on Judah as an elemental mystery, and therefore took him for granted.

Week succeeded week, and Judah made the best of them. The Kronemann episode, as he called it to himself, was fading from his mind beneath the stress of work. Occasionally Bertha's face and voice came to trouble him. For antidote he worked harder. But at the end of a month arrived her reminder—the reminder which he had not desired, and which, nevertheless, gladdened him more than he dared admit. The note read as follows:

'You are not paying me a compliment. I have not thanked you for your service. I intended, on your own principle, evincing my gratitude in my friendship. You evidently require neither; and I grieve for it.
BERTHA KRONEMANN.'

After that he went, although he guessed what it would mean. He guessed right. He took

away with him from his visit the consciousness that he lay in the balance; a hair's-weight might decide whether henceforth he would belong to himself or to her. And that made him struggle on a little longer; but only a little. The third time he left her a vanquished man, but one who exulted in his downfall. It made him strong—even as the giant of old rose reinforced by contact with his mother earth; and that justified him in his own eyes. She did not sap his energies—she fed them till they overflowed with their exuberance; and because she did that she was a laudable necessity. But then came a fear—a horrible fear—that made him writhe. This spell, this enchantment, in which he revelled was precarious; it hung on a thread. Any day, every day, he might lose the right to come to her for his inspiration; and the rest would be aimless, nameless agony—the slow-gnawing, relentless worm that poisoned and cankered and killed. One evening, as they were alone—she had been singing to him—she noticed the ungovernable terror in his eyes. She asked him what it meant.

'You ought to know,' he said almost sullenly; 'you put it there. One thing only can remove it.'

'And that is?'

For reply he gave her a look; but no—it was not a look, it was his soul pointing its finger straight at her.

'Myself?' she echoed, drooping her head.

'Yourself. Will you do it? You know how.'

'You have a right to ask the question,' she said at last; 'only it is not of me you should ask it—of my father. And'—a flush crept over her at the words—'ask him soon.'

'To-morrow,' he ventured, scarcely managing the word.

She hurried shamefacedly to the door; from there she nodded assent.

A minute later he was out in the street, and the dull thud of his footsteps was music in his ears. Everything was music and light and gladness. Perhaps it would be that only till to-morrow; but while it lasted he would quaff it to the dregs.

A CRUISE IN A CRUISER.

MANY people in these bustling days have gone to sea in the liners that traverse the great trade-routes and carry passengers in more or less luxury; but comparatively few have had the chance of taking a cruise in a man-of-war—one of those ships that form England's Royal Navy—the great first line of defence that secures the honour and well-being of our country. Let me transcribe a few notes

made on board a fast cruiser, the type of ship that represents the frigate of old days; one of the scouts of the battle-fleet when it sails in company; one of the guardians of our commerce when it is on detached duty.

The cruiser in which I was privileged to embark was employed in relief-duty. She had to convey about two hundred men from Plymouth to the Mediterranean squadron, and then to bring back a like number to Plymouth. The captain

was an old friend with the blessed naval gifts of hospitality and sociability, and he repeated a long-standing invitation that I should spend a month with him under the white ensign.

The ship is moored near Saltash, and, on a breezy morning, slipping our moorings, we steam down Plymouth harbour. The great battleship in which the commander-in-chief hoists his flag is duly saluted by the marines drawn up on the poop, and we pass by Drake's Island outside the breakwater. The pilot is dropped, the speed increased to a hundred revolutions, and we are in blue water. There is a general feeling of thankfulness, that we have a fine morning for a start. The men have been told off to many of their duties, but much remains to be done before everything is ship-shape. The first lieutenant is rushing about, note-book in hand, keeping every officer and seaman busy, and seeing that each knows his place and his work under every circumstance. The navigating lieutenant is on the fore-bridge with the captain; and our course is laid for Ushant. The captain is, of course, responsible for the navigation, as for everything else; but the navigating lieutenant lays down our track upon the chart, and can at any moment show the exact position of the ship. Our navigator, as a specialist, is very keen and enthusiastic about his work, and it is seldom indeed that he is not busily employed. By day and night he is ever on the alert. Every point that he sights, every light that sheds its beam across the water, enables him to take his bearings. He shoots the sun by day, and asks questions of the moon and stars by night. He has his dead-reckoning from the log; and even if it is obscure around, he can still form a shrewd guess as to the ship's whereabouts; but he does not like to be reduced to this, for many unforeseen influences may be at work, any one of which may produce grave error.

The first lieutenant is the mainspring of the whole ship. He is supposed never to have a minute to himself at sea, and to have his work doubled when he is in harbour. In a cruiser that does not carry a commander he is the senior executive officer. He does all the work of an adjutant in the army, and a good deal more besides. Everything passes through his hands, and his voice is heard throughout the day carrying on the ship's routine. Instruction, reproof, and very occasionally approbation flow from his lips without pause, and withal one may live for days in the smartest ship and 'never (well, hardly ever) hear a big, big D.' The freedom of expression that used to be common in her Majesty's naval service has of late years been much modified.

The ship's armament is all snugly tucked away. The breech of every gun is shrouded with a waterproof cover, and the threatening muzzles are turned inboard, parallel with the ship's sides. Rifles and cutlasses are hung in racks in sheltered places, and the torpedo-tubes modestly hide themselves in the shade. About the most interesting

to an onlooker of the many drills that occupy the day is the falling-in of the ship's company at 'General Quarters.' As we have a scratch crew who have only just come together, and many of whom may not have previously served in a ship of our class and armed with our ordnance, the first lieutenant commences by assembling them and repeating to them in detail what has to be done by each of the parties already told off. They are dismissed, and a few minutes later the bugle sounds. What a scene of orderly bustle follows! The officers are buckling on their swords; the seamen and marines run to the arm-racks, fetch rifles and cutlasses, and sling them behind the guns in readiness for a possible hand-to-hand combat. Every man has girt himself with an ammunition-pouch, and the guns' crews fall in by their own pieces. The ports are opened; the guns are swung round and pointed over the sides. The hoists for shell communicating with the magazines are opened, the torpedo-tubes are manned, and, in four minutes from the sound of the bugle, the ship is ready to speak in tones of thunder to an enemy. Very fair work; but, of course, in a ship that has been long in commission everything, from constant iteration, goes like clockwork, and the slight delays which are now unavoidable never occur. When a ship is really cleared for action, which is done frequently during a commission, not only are the guns prepared, but the railings round the poop and fore-castle fall flat, every possible object of hamper is removed, and nothing is left that could be at all in the way of the freest movement. I have said that, with a new crew, everything was ready for action in about four minutes; but in a well-drilled ship the broadside could be fired in less than two minutes from the last note of the bugle's warning, and in time of war everything would be in such a state of readiness (a certain amount of ammunition ready on deck, &c.) that the order to come into action and the firing of the first shot would be almost simultaneous.

Let us look at our armament. There are two six-inch guns, one on the poop and one on the fore-castle, each of which throws a 100-lb. projectile. These great pieces are mounted on elaborate pivoting machinery, and can be traversed, sighted, and fired as easily as a fowling-piece. Then there are six 4.7 guns, each throwing a 45-lb. projectile. These, like the two six-inch guns, have their crews protected by shields, and are equally accurate and manageable. In addition there are eight six-pounders, four Nordenfelts, and four torpedo-tubes. Heavy as is the fire of such an armament, there is undoubtedly much question among naval officers whether our cruisers are sufficiently well armed in comparison with those of France and other powers. The theory on which our administrative authorities work is, that, coal-carrying capacity with a large supply

of ammunition (involving a comparatively light armament) is preferable to heavier guns with less room for coal and a smaller ammunition supply. It may be admitted that a French cruiser of equal nominal size might, at broadside to broadside, overpower an English one; but before the ships could thus meet *à outrance* there is much that must occur. Lighter, faster, able to remain longer at sea, it may well be supposed that the English cruisers would more than hold their own against the heavier-armed ships of a foreign power, even as Lord Howard's light craft were able successfully to tackle the floating castles of the Armada. Superior seamanship and gunnery would also have much influence in striking a balance.

Clearing away all deck hamper for action has been mentioned, and the question at once arises, What is to become of the ship's boats which hang on davits fore and aft? In case of serious action every boat would become a source of grave danger. If an enemy's shot struck any one of them (and they are in such exposed positions that they must inevitably be struck) the splinters of wood and iron would carry death and destruction to the guns' crews and others on deck. The scattering fragments, too, would be almost worse than the bursting shell. It could not be hoped that, after an engagement of half-an-hour, there would be a single boat left that could float, and meantime their presence would have added heavily to the already inevitable loss of life in action. So completely has this been recognised that many naval officers of experience have it in their minds that, if they were called upon to engage, they would drop their boats over the ship's side and let them drift. When the action was over, a victorious ship could then cruise round the place where it had been fought, and take the chance (a reasonably good one) of picking up at least some of her boats.

From arms to the men. Our ship's complement when fully manned is something short of three hundred men, including marines and engine-room staff. Certainly a more workman-like lot it would not be easy to find than the men whom we now have on board. They are not giants, and in actual physical size I believe that the men of the French navy, drawn from the fishing population of the coasts, have the advantage over the British bluejackets. But, as I have already said, our men are caught young, and have two or three years' training as boys before they are rated as men and commence their regular twelve years of service. In handiness, general knowledge, discipline, and activity they leave little to be desired. The difficulty which is presented by the modern construction of ships of war is that of giving to the crews sufficient physical work to keep them in condition. Low be it spoken: many of the men are actually fat, or at any rate it must be acknowledged that they have a tendency to embonpoint. In the big battle-ships there is space enough to

have arrangements and appliances for gymnastic exercises, but in smaller craft this is impossible. While in harbour the men are often landed and exercised in battalion movements, and this, besides rendering them peculiarly efficient for service in the naval brigades that take so brilliant a part in our wars, is of essential value in keeping them healthy and replacing the work which was, in the old days, provided by the handling of sails and ropes, and the constant duties aloft.

Marvellous to an onlooker are the adaptability with which all the men, by virtue of their previous long and careful training, fall into their places in a new ship, the quickness with which they become familiar with all the complicated details of its working, their knowledge of the elaborate machinery of modern days, and the smartness with which they handle the tremendous armament committed to their charge. So much for their efficiency. If the best authorities, the captains who command them, may be credited, their general good conduct and sense of duty are equally remarkable. The offences that they commit are few and unimportant, and are kept well in hand by the taut yet considerate manner in which authority is exercised by their officers. As an example of the difference between the condition of the English navy and those of foreign powers, it was credibly reported that, when two Russian battle-ships were lately in the vicinity of Malta, three men were hanged for breaches of discipline. Let us think what would be said if such an occurrence took place on the ships of a British squadron.

As the captain's guest I was made free of his quarters by day, and occupied a spare officer's cabin by night. Every officer above the rank of sub-lieutenant has little of discomfort in his accommodation at sea. The ordinary cabins are certainly not large, but every inch of space is utilised, and the ordinary requirements of an English gentleman are very fairly met. There are plenty of roomy lockers in which to stow away the most voluminous wardrobe. There is a bath, and plenty of hot water is procurable. The bed has the most comfortable of spring-mattresses, and is long enough for a man of many inches. The quarters where the captain dwells in solitary state are quite as extensive and comfortable as an ordinary bachelor's lodgings on shore. He has an after-cabin as a sitting-room, a fore-cabin as a dining-room and a sleeping-cabin, and these rooms may be, and generally are, as luxurious as a boudoir. Fireplace, writing-table, arm-chairs, mirror, couches, and settees are all provided by government; and the quarters only require the pretty coverings, bookcases, pictures, &c., which their occupant adds according to his taste, to be fit for anybody's reception. There are objects present, however, which show that the cabin is not in a smart holiday yacht. Two six-pounder guns have their places, and in an action the

captain's quarters are no unimportant part of the ship's fighting strength.

The officers of the ship mess together in the wardroom; and in a bigger ship that carries midshipmen, all the junior officers mess in the gun-room. It has often been suggested that all officers, including the captain, should mess together, as is the custom in the sister service; and it is believed that the practice would have many advantages. As it is, though captains make a point of asking some of their officers to dinner very frequently, the commander of a ship leads most certainly what Sir Walter calls 'a life both dull and dignified.'

We have been bowling along at the rate of fifteen knots an hour, and on the evening of our first day at sea we are off Ushant. We enter the Bay of Biscay still carrying fair weather with us, and plough our way towards Finisterre; and in little over twenty-four hours more we find ourselves passing down the sunlit shores of Portugal. It is Sunday morning, and, after the time-honoured custom of the navy, the whole ship's company assemble for divine service, which is read by the captain, as the ship does not carry a chaplain. How infinitely impressive and touching it is to hear the beautiful prayers of the Church service in such a place, and very especially those which are provided for the use of the navy—the humble supplication, 'O Eternal Lord God . . . Be pleased to receive into Thy almighty and most gracious protection the persons of us Thy servants, and the fleet in which we serve!' And it is not on Sundays only that divine service is held. Daily prayers are read by the captain, and never may a more reverent and devout congregation be seen than the crowd of England's fighting-men who follow his words and repeat the solemn thanksgiving and supplication.

On the fourth day after leaving Plymouth we are at Gibraltar, and having filled up our coal-bunkers, another day sees us speeding on to Malta with the white crests of the Sierra Nevada on our beam. How many places of interest we pass, first on the Spanish coast and then on the African! But the skipper does not care to be near the shore, and we see little but the bold outline of the hills. At last Gozo rises from the waters, with Malta beyond it. The light of evening falls on the white houses and gigantic forts of Valetta, and our bows are turned to the narrow entrance of the man-of-war harbour. As we steam slowly past St Elmo, the massive forms of battle-ship after battle-ship, cruiser after cruiser, torpedo-boat after torpedo-boat, come in view. The greater part of the Mediterranean squadron is in port. How spick and span they all look!—very different from our craft, which is only on a short commission, and whose officers have not had time and opportunity to give the finishing touches that accentuate the beauty of graceful lines and elaborate equipment.

There can hardly be a more completely and

lovingly cared-for thing on earth than a British man-of-war in commission. The great black sides, smooth and polished as if enamelled; the spotless paint that marks out the fittings; the great ordnance burnished like silver; the gorgeous gilding on stem and stern; every piece of metal-work shining like an ornament in a lady's drawing-room; the boats delicately painted and varnished, and every article of equipment stowed in the most rigid order—all mark the most careful supervision of details, the most perfect discipline and organisation. But let it not be supposed that the British taxpayer pays for all the extreme of polish and decoration in a warship's appearance. When she is handed over to her officers and crew there is nothing provided for her beautification beyond the most plain and simple painting and ornament. Everything in excess is provided out of the private pocket of the senior executive officer (the commander in a battle-ship or the first lieutenant in a cruiser), to whom his ship is as a wife or child, to be turned out radiant and spotless at all times; and this is no trifling expense. Even in a cruiser it amounts to more than £50 a year, and in a large craft a far larger sum is, of course, necessary. Sometimes the captain shares the expense, but not always. However, whatever of smartness the ship has, the senior executive officer reaps his reward in the portion of credit that he receives, and this may recommend him for advancement to the powers that be.

Constant signalling has been going on between us and the flagship, and orders have been received that we are to moor to buoys in a particular spot. As we take up our position the ship is surrounded by a crowd of shore-boats, and the special bumboatman who is to have her custom makes his appearance on board. These bumboatmen are the universal providers of a seaport, and they make a very good thing out of it. The bumboatman provides fruit, vegetables, fresh bread, and many little luxuries that the ship's company wish to purchase. They take off the officers' washing, execute numberless little commissions, and provide for the many little requirements that make themselves felt after even a few days at sea. Our bumboatman is a most respectable-looking old Snytch (as an inhabitant of Malta is called by the English). He is said not to be able to read or write; but no piece of business ever comes amiss to him, no commission is ever forgotten. By some mysterious *memoria technica*, everything to be carried in his mind is carefully packed away in some brain pigeon-hole, and is never overlooked. 'Valda, I want a ticket for the opera to-night.' 'Valda, don't forget my washing.' 'Valda, get me some scented soap.' 'Valda, bring me some cigarettes,' &c. And it is perfectly certain that what Valda says he will do will be most punctually performed. It is said that the great Lipton is very anxious to get all the bumboat work at Malta into his hands; and that he offered, if the naval

authorities would give him the monopoly, to run a special steamer regularly to the Levant squadron, which would take out all supplies, and, if required, would bring back all invalids to the naval hospital at Malta. This was, however, more than could be conceded, and the trade is still in the hands of local men, who have left little to be desired in times past, and, as they are stimulated by active competition, may be trusted to meet all requirements in the future.

We have little time for more than a sip of the flood of pleasure-making and hospitality for which Malta is so famous. The men that have been brought out are distributed to their new ships. Time-expired men have come on board in their places, the coal-bunkers are again filled, and, as time presses, we are ordered to sea.

The winds to be dreaded in the neighbourhood of Malta are the Gregales, those that blow from the north-east. Many people believe that gales are nearly unknown in the Mediterranean, and that it is ever a sunny, smiling sea. Let them expunge such an idea from their minds; the weather can be as rough there as in any other sea. As soon as we have cleared the harbour we find that we are in the sweep of a rapidly freshening gale; and for the next forty-eight hours we are certainly very far from being at our ease. Our cruiser is an excellent sea-boat, but she is a very wet one, and her decks are constantly awash. She rolls, pitches, and staggers under the mighty thrashing of the waves. Everything that is not securely and firmly lashed on the decks or in the cabins breaks loose and charges erratically from side to side.

Even a gale from the Gulf of Lyons must come to an end at last, and once more we are able to lay on our course and increase our speed to fourteen or fifteen knots. Again we touch at Gibraltar, where we find an Italian and an American man-of-war. The courtesies of navies are interchanged; an officer arrives from each ship in the fullest of

full-dress to pay a ceremonious visit, and one of our officers has in turn to mount his epaulets and cocked-hat and return the compliment.

A few hours' stay and, our bows directed towards the gorgeous sunset glowing at the mouth of the Straits, we left the Pillars of Hercules behind. We had paid our debt to fortune in enduring a Mediterranean gale, and the Atlantic was kind and equable. There were only two incidents to mark our homeward voyage. Off the Portuguese coast we passed a British battleship outward bound. She was a couple of miles distant, but we interchanged long messages by means of the semaphore on the poop. Keen and well-trained signalmen on board of each vessel, with strong glasses, communicate with marvellous precision and rapidity. To such a pitch of perfection has this semaphore signalling been carried that communication has been established between ships *sixteen* miles apart.

One evening in the Bay of Biscay we were at dinner, when the signalman on duty came to report 'a fleet of foreign battle-ships on the star-board beam.' Of course the captain rushed at once to the bridge, and thence through the darkness could be seen the distant, flashing electric-light signals of warships. In my ignorance I asked, 'How can we know that this is not our own Channel fleet?' The answer was prompt: 'If they were our own ships they would be signalling with masthead lights; and besides, no British fleet could be in such slovenly formation. British ships would be correctly in their stations, three cables apart; and just look at these. They are not keeping station at all. Two ships are more than a mile apart, and the others are at all sorts of distances. They are probably the French Channel fleet.' What a pleasing exemplification to the novice of the impossibility which the warships of other nations find in trying to emulate the stern regularity which is the pride of the British fleet!

OLIVES AND OIL-MAKING AT SORRENTO.



NE of the principal industries of the Sorrentine peninsula, which is equally lucrative with that of oranges and lemons, if not actually more lucrative, is the cultivation of the olive and the export of oil.

The whole line of coast from Castellamare to Massalubrense is dotted over with picturesque-looking olive-trees. They are grown chiefly on the mountain and hill sides, as they thrive best in a rocky and dry soil. Their twisted gnarled branches take the most fantastic shapes, and the dark-green leaves, with their silvery lining looking gray in the distance, are restful to the eye in the brilliant landscape, with its glittering blue sky and sea.

The olive yields an abundant crop once in two years. The season when olives are plentiful is called by the *contadini* 'Panno grasso,' or the fat year; the other when they are scarce being 'Panno magro,' or lean year. In the month of September the fruit begins to turn a bluish black, but it is not fully coloured till October. It is often attacked by small maggots such as are found in cherries, and then it falls from the trees; but though the olives are partially spoilt, they are picked off the ground and an inferior kind of oil is made from them. The longer they remain on the trees the better is the quality of oil they produce. In other parts of Italy they are seldom gathered before the month of December,

but on the coast of Sorrento it is generally necessary to harvest them earlier. In 1897 the crop was abundant and promised well, but owing to the want of rain in August the fruit became dry and shrivelled; and when the heavy rains came in September much of it rotted and fell, and most of it had to be gathered before it was entirely spoilt. In such a season, the end of October will see the trees entirely despoiled, and the fine crop will bring in a poor harvest and produce an inferior quality of oil.

The *contadini* have a bad habit of shaking the trees violently to bring down the olives, so as to save themselves the trouble of climbing in the branches to gather them. Those that are gathered are sound and without the bruises which are inevitable when they are shaken down or fall of themselves. Sheets and sacking are generally spread on the ground to receive the fruit, as it is easier to see and collect it than on the dark earth or grass, where it is easily trampled upon.

Women and children are usually employed to collect the fallen olives, for the work, though light, requires time and patience. The men who pluck them from the trees have a small, deep basket, which they hang on a branch as they climb from one to another. They use a stick with an iron hook at the end to bend down the upper branches, which are often the most laden and are too weak to bear their weight. When the little basket is full they hand it to a companion waiting at the foot of the tree, to receive and empty it in the large baskets, which when filled are carried on the heads of women to the mill.

The fruit should be ground at once, for if it is left heaped up till it be convenient to do so it begins to ferment, and the oil made from it has a strong, unpleasant flavour.

Some of the richer proprietors have their oil made by machinery, but the more primitive method is chiefly used in Sorrento and its neighbourhood.

The olives are emptied in an enormous stone basin or reservoir, in the centre of which is a grindstone. A thick wooden beam reaches from it to the rafters of the building where the mill stands. In the centre of this beam another is inserted, which, when it is worked, turns the mill, and the olives beneath are crushed and ground. A mule tied to one end of the cross-beam is driven round and round, blindfolded to prevent his becoming giddy. Men are sometimes employed instead of a mule, but this is a waste of labour, for at least four men are required (that is, two at each end of the cross-beam) to do the work of one mule. A man with a wooden spade must constantly collect the olives and shovel them under the grindstone as they are flung against the side of the basin by the motion of the mill as it works. When the crushed mass is removed for the oil to be extracted it has a dark-brown appearance, somewhat like peat. This is stacked

up like a haystack, except that, instead of being round, it is flat on the top. It is then placed under a press, which is also worked by hand, and in this both men and women are employed. This work is far harder than that of grinding the olives. A party of visitors, consisting of two strong young men and several ladies, tried for fun with their united strength to work the press, but could hardly move it an inch. When the son of one of the *contadini*, a mere lad, who was watching their efforts, joined them, they found they could work it easily.

The *contadini* are very strong, being accustomed to work from their childhood, besides having the knack that is required to manage the unwieldy machine used for pressing. As the heavy weights ascend and descend upon the mass beneath, those at work sway backwards and forwards as they throw all their weight in moving the cumbersome levers.

If one of the girls, in the impetus given, stumbles and falls, as is often the case, her partner claims a kiss by way of forfeit; and so the work goes on, brightened by fun and merriment.

When the press is in motion the oil streams from the mass beneath it into a large tank which stands on the floor below. Olives contain a watery juice as well as oil, and the former, which is black and muddy-looking, remains at the bottom while the oil floats to the top. When the tank is full the loose planks of the flooring above are removed, the oil is taken out and put in large earthenware or glass jars, the water being thrown away. After a few days it must be changed into other jars, as it forms a deposit. This is done at intervals till it is perfectly clear and free from all impurity. The last oil made in the season is always the best and most refined, as it is the produce of the olives which, being perfectly sound, have remained the longest on the trees. The oil of Sorrento is not equal to that of Lucca and Apulia, but it is thicker and more greasy, and therefore goes further, and the poorer classes prefer it, as having more flavour. It is sold by the litre or by the kilo—never by the bottle. The average price of fine salad-oil is from one franc to a franc and a half a litre. The oil made during the season is always cheaper than that of the preceding year, for, however carefully it may have been purified, a slight deposit always forms, whereas there is no waste whatever when it has stood for a year or more. It is sent in large quantities to Naples, but is seldom exported abroad, as is that of other parts of Italy.

The olives used for eating are of a different quality and much larger than those used for oil. They are gathered when still quite green; and the gathering must be done very carefully, as they would be worthless if bruised.

They are placed in salt and water, where they remain for some time before being transferred to jars, which are hermetically sealed. They must

on no account be touched by the hand when they are taken out of the salt and water, as in that case they would all be spoilt. A silver or wooden spoon must be used in transferring them to the jars.

There are different kinds of olives used for preserving, and the preparation of each quality differs slightly in some respects. The small olives used for oil, when quite ripe and black, are also much eaten by the people. They are preserved with salt alone, and when they become too dry a little oil is added to soften them. These are never placed in jars, but are sold by the kilo and are very cheap.

It takes twelve or fifteen years for a tree to grow to its normal size, and the olive, as every one knows, lives for centuries. It is valuable not only for the fruit it yields, but also for its wood, which is much prized.

The Sorrento woodwork so much bought by English people is made almost exclusively of olive, and it is also used for furniture. Even the pulp

or paste, after the oil is extracted from it, is serviceable, for it is dried, broken up, and burnt as firewood. Sometimes, when taken out of the mill and still moist, it is given to pigs mixed with other food, so that no part of the fruit is ever wasted.

It is the custom of many of the landed proprietors to plant an olive-grove when a daughter is born, and it forms her dowry when she is grown up.

So high a value is placed on these trees that the space on which one of them could stand is grudged for any other purpose. In Apulia, where they are still more valuable, as they grow to a much greater size, the utilitarian principle is carried to such lengths that scarcely any flowers are ever planted, as they have no market value. Yet, indeed, it cannot be said that the olive is for use alone, for the great trees, though somewhat sombre in appearance, have a grace and beauty of their own.

GERMAN SONG-CANARIES.

By the BARONESS VON ROTBERG.

IN powers of song no canaries can match those of the Harz Mountains. German canaries can be divided into two kinds—the common country-bred bird and the Harz canary or songster. It is about the latter that

I am going to tell you. The home of these birds, the Harz, an entirely isolated chain of mountains rising out of the plain between the rivers Leine and Saale, is the most northern elevation of importance in Germany, and lies partly in Prussia, partly in Anhalt and Brunswick. The best song-canaries are reared here at the present time, chiefly in Andreasberg, a town also celebrated for its silver-mines. In every house and cottage of the place you see canaries; and on a fine summer's day, when walking by, their song greets you from every open door and window. Whereas with other races of canaries colour, markings, shape, and size are important points, with this breed there is but one—their song. The birds are usually of middle size and strongly built; the head is larger, the legs shorter, and the neck not so long as in the common canary; the legs slant backwards a little, and the bird does not stand as upright as the others. The breast ought to be broad and strong, the eyes large and lively; the feathers must lie smooth; and the bird ought to execute all its movements with a sort of coquetry. The colours vary from straw to golden-yellow, some with green markings; but deeper shades of yellow are not to be found among them. If we say that these birds have to take the second place in outward beauty of form and colour, we certainly must give them the first of all in point of song. Their entire value lies in this. With the utmost care and

science their voice has been cultivated for years, and splendid results have been obtained. The song of a really first-class Harz bird is a marvel of beauty for those who understand it; but it needs much practice and a musical ear to note slight differences and faults, and to be able to choose the really best songster among a crowd of birds.

The Harz canary is easily bred. A large cage in a sitting-room will answer this purpose, and the birds will build their nest and hatch their young in a room where people are constantly going in and out. This tameness is one of their great attractions, for it is a pleasure to have the pretty, lively little birds near one, and to be able to watch their doings. The middle of March is the best time for them to set up housekeeping. The cock ought always to be put into the cage intended for breeding a few days sooner than the hen, so that by the time she comes he will be master of the house. This avoids much quarrelling, and the birds settle down together sooner. The cocks, on account of their fiery temper, often quarrel; some will attack anybody who ventures to put a finger between the bars. Wire cages without any wood are always the best, and care should be taken to keep them as clean as possible. After the birds have been together for a fortnight, the cock will be seen feeding the hen, and the latter will be busy about her nest. Usually about the beginning of April the first egg is laid, and the hen ought to continue laying daily, the usual number being four to five eggs, sometimes less, hardly ever more. From the laying of the first egg all particulars about the breeding ought to be noted down. The Harz hens usually are model

mothers, seldom deserting their nests, and always feeding the young birds well. The hen sits thirteen days. When the young are hatched the breeder must watch carefully to see if they are properly fed by the parents. In sixteen or eighteen days the young birds leave the nest, but it is a fortnight before they are able to feed themselves. Summer rape-seed is the staple food of the Harz canary, varied by peeled oats and canary-seed, both of which are given in separate dishes, never mixed. Once a week the birds get a small quantity of hard-boiled egg, chopped up fine; in breeding-time this must be given daily. Every breeder has two or more old cocks, the best songsters he has been able to pick out, which are never used for breeding purposes, and are usually kept in small darkened cages. These are the masters who give the young birds their musical education. When the nestlings are about six weeks old, cocks and hens ought to be separated. The cocks are put into a large cage till they have developed properly; after two months they are put singly into smaller cages and placed in a room with the master bird, yet so that they cannot see each other. It is now the work of the breeder carefully to listen and to judge the voices of the birds and the progress they are making. According to their merits he chooses the best singers. These are then put into what are called 'singing-boxes,' cages so arranged as to be almost dark—usually a small wire cage placed inside a tin box, with a curtain at one side, which is withdrawn when the bird is to sing. Another thing the breeders pay great attention to is that their canaries never hear an inferior bird or other sort of bird, as they are apt quickly to learn wrong notes and so to spoil their song. Great care is taken to keep the birds quiet, as hasty singing is invariably condemned, and leads to a broken, jerky sort of melody. It is incredible what an amount of education a song-canary has to go through, the bird needing about six months to learn one much-prized melody. The excellence of the song consists not so much in its loudness, or even in its tone, as in varied repetitions of certain strains. Each melody has its special name, and the birds are divided into different classes according to the tunes they sing. There are supposed to be as many as twenty-two different strains, and some birds have a compass of four octaves. The faults of song are catalogued with equal accuracy, each being separately defined; and good breeders are very particular to remove all birds possessing faulty song as soon as they perceive it, as otherwise the best songsters could be spoiled by them.

As a rule, birds are supposed to have finished their musical education when they are seven months old, but breeders prefer to leave the young cocks with their master some time longer, as experience shows that a few weeks' longer practice enables the bird when sold to preserve his original song better. Great care is taken to

keep the songsters in an even, moderate temperature, and, above all things, draughts must be avoided, as these may cause them to become hoarse or to lose their voices altogether. The Harz canaries are not so hardy as other breeds, and are especially susceptible of cold, one reason for this being that the breeders often keep them in small, over-heated rooms, some even employing artificial warmth to hasten nesting. However, with care any of these birds can be gradually accustomed to the ordinary temperature of a dwelling-room.

The number of people who keep canaries in Germany is very great; they are to be found in the houses of the rich as in the cottages of the poor, and everywhere the little yellow songster is valued and cherished. Workmen often save their money to buy and keep a canary, and the breeding is sometimes an important item in the income of poorer families. In the Harz districts the trade in canaries is the source of the principal income to the inhabitants, many thousand birds being exported every year, the prices varying for cocks from ten shillings a head wholesale to thirty shillings or three pounds for best single birds. This may seem a great deal, but some first-class singers have been known to fetch even more. The canary's song is seldom heard in perfection; and the few birds who reach the highest standard of melody are not often for sale, breeders preferring to keep them for their own use as masters. Only those who have had the opportunity of hearing one of these rare birds can form an idea of what a beautiful thing the song of a canary can be.

OUTWARD-BOUND.

I have taken good-night at the world, and at all the fasherie of the same.
JOHN KNOX.

Good-bye, Old World; shake hands before I go.
I would not leave behind a single foe.
We've lived for different objects, different ends;
My God has not been your God, nor yours mine;
Something's amiss, Heaven only comprehends.
As for your suitors, how could they combine
With hearts that hungered for the higher love,
Seeking the light that cometh from above?
Our forced copartnership, thank God, now stays
At parting of the ways.
I leave my burden with you, here below;
Your presence is not suffered where I go.

But Thou, O Mother Earth! must we too part—
We, who have loved each other, heart for heart!
Have I not strained my ear to breeze and brook,
By hill and valley, flower-enamelled sod,
Till thou hast shown me in thy secret book,
On every leaf, the signature of God?—
Thy revelation, flashing from afar,
The things that are not through the things that are.
O Mother, it were pain to part with you
Unless I surely knew
That earth, air, ocean, all thy mighty sum,
Were but the mirror of a world to come.

J. B. SELKIRK.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

PRIME-MINISTERS I HAVE KNOWN: ENGLISH AND FOREIGN.

By T. H. S. ESCOTT, Author of *England: Its People, Polity, and Pursuits; Personal Forces of the Period, &c.*

ON the old-fashioned bowling-green of a manor-house in the extreme west of the county of Somerset, under the shadow of the purple heather-clad Quantocks, touched by the gold of the setting sun, when the present century was about entering middle age, there walked two men who had each of them been Prime-Minister of the Queen. They were visiting one of their supporters, the uncle of the present writer, at his country house, Hartrow Manor, near Taunton, then in his earliest childhood. Some one present had suggested a game of bowls; but it was the first day of the week.

Even fashionable London could not, at this early date, have foreseen Sabbaths in the valley of the Thames divided between steam-launching and lawn tennis. The great Duke garnished his talk with the expletives which had not then gone out of date. He tolerated no neglect of Sunday ordinances, and together with Sir Robert Peel frowned down the desecrating suggestion of producing the bowl-box. This was how I in my infancy just missed the sight of the heroes of Waterloo and of Corn-Law Repeal playing the same game as that which on Plymouth Hoe some three centuries earlier the great Devonshire captains insisted on finishing though the Armada was full in sight. There was, they said, as proved to be the case, plenty of time to finish their rubber and thrash the Spaniard too.

The Prime-Minister of whom not only the west country but the whole English mind and ear were most full in those comparatively early days of this expiring century was neither Sir Robert nor the Duke, but the representative of the west of England borough of Tiverton. Within the opportunities of observation common to those born about the middle of this century no public man has ever so entirely possessed the popular mind, provincial or metropolitan, on the Thames or on the Exe, as Lord Palmerston.

No. 37.—VOL. I.

[All Rights Reserved.]

When in the autumn of 1865 he died, every cab and omnibus driver in London put himself into mourning. The whole country-side round Tiverton in thought walked in his funeral procession, for the fame of Palmerston's personality had overflowed from the borough he represented into the whole neighbourhood. No native, therefore, of that part of the kingdom being much there at that period could fail to be steeped in personal reminiscences of the well-knit figure in the blue frock-coat with gilt buttons, and buff waistcoat; the shapely head covered with hair which had not yet quite lost its curl—in a word, with all the ensigns of the jaunty octogenarian presence that was really to those who saw it a personal, not less than a national, pride and delight.

Among the college acquaintances of the present writer, though on a different foundation, was a former pupil of Blundell's School, Tiverton, who owed liberation from school durance to the unexpected presence of the borough member and his friend, Sir Thomas Acland, who died immediately after Mr Gladstone. The two gentlemen had chanced to enter Blundell's School; here they found a boy engaged on the imposition, which kept him from the half-holiday games. He had been set as a task a copy of verses on, I think, Andromeda, and could make nothing of the theme. Palmerston found out what was the matter. Turning round to his companion, he said, 'Acland, do that boy's verses for him.' They were done, and the lad was set at liberty. While Tiverton exists as a town, no statue would be needed to keep alive the memory of its former member; for memories and anecdotes of him encounter one at the corner of every street. Some chance had brought me to the town, in whose neighbourhood many of my early days were passed, while an election was going on during the latest fifties. The hustings stood, I think, close to St Peter's Church. Lord Palmerston died, as

AUGUST 13, 1898.

I believe he always did, was staying at the inn named after him. I had squeezed my way into his committee-room; seeing him there, 'dauntless child'—in Gray's phrase—that I was, I had introduced myself by mentioning the name of a relative who, being in the House of Commons, must, I felt sure, be known to him. 'Come on the hustings! By all means, my little man, if you think you can climb up.' I cannot have been much more than six years of age at the time, but climb up I did. I was rewarded by witnessing one of the historic encounters between Lord Palmerston and his most pertinacious local opponent, the butcher, whom he insisted on publicly calling 'my old friend, Mr Rowcliffe.' This tradesman I can recall as clearly as if I had seen him yesterday: a man of good presence, with a clever face, a strong mouth, and a certain look of Disraeli as to the shape of and lines about the nose. On the same day as I witnessed this historic encounter between the statesman whom no interruptions could put out of temper, and the sturdy and clever old Chartist whom no Palmerstonian explanations could satisfy, there was being enacted behind the scenes a Palmerstonian incident which I did not witness, but of which I was informed by one who did. On the whole, Lord Palmerston's relations with the more serious among his constituents were surprisingly smooth. At this election a Nonconformist minister refused to give the popular favourite his vote until he was satisfied about his lordship being a 'saved soul.' Personally heckled on the delicate subject by this inquisitor, the statesman evasively, by way of reply, expressed a hope that the performance of his public duties showed his desire to obey the cardinal precept of 'doing to others as he would they should do unto him.' 'Ah!' exclaimed the divine, 'you look to be saved by your works. So did the Jews. In that case, my lord, you will have to submit to a certain Jewish rite.'

Palmerston's local services to his borough out of Parliament were, as might be supposed, worldly rather than other-worldly. He revived the Tiverton race-meeting that had long lapsed. He ran some of his horses there for some years without much success. Twitted on his failures, he replied, 'Well, I must try to get John Day' (his trainer) 'to send me something better.' The result was the arrival of his mare which had won the Cesarewitch, 'Iliona,' and her carrying all before her on the west-country course. Any one who about this time happened to be in Hampshire, near Lyndhurst, where 'Broadlands,' Lord Palmerston's house, stood, might have seen him clad generally in a swallow-tailed dress-coat, mounted on a thoroughbred colt, with a groom behind him, riding often at a hand-gallop to Danebury, where his horses were trained. Always genial to his inferiors, and often chatty, Palmerston wasted words with no one. So soon as he had heard

Day's account of his stud, and of the money the trainer might be putting for his employer on some of the horses, often without dismounting, usually or always without entering the trainer's house, John Day's employer rode back to his own home. Palmerston, as every one knows, was the most abstemious of men. 'The sort of internal sinking of which servants complain is,' he often said, 'the luxury of housemaids denied to statesmen.' He never wanted or took anything between meals. My old friend, the late Mr Abraham Hayward, lived perhaps more with Palmerston than any other man of his time; he told me he had never known the 'evergreen Premier' to drink more than one glass of the lightest, almost unalcoholised sherry, sometimes nothing but water, at lunch, or two glasses of sherry at dinner. Wherever he might be, in London or the country, just the amount of exercise which he had found useful to his health seemed his first aim. By compulsion of sedentary occupations, he always evaded sedentary habits. At home, in Hampshire or in Piccadilly, he entered his study every night at ten, transacted all his business, whether of reading or writing, at a standing desk. When in office and kept closely within-doors at the Treasury, he used two desks. On one of these were his papers, on the other was his ink-bottle, so that he could not for any time use his pen without partly making the tour of the room to replenish it.

The most methodical of men in all things which were to him business, he was as careless as the younger Pitt himself in his private money affairs. It is a perfectly true story that a London tradesman—I believe a coachbuilder—exasperated by his customer's neglect, actually took steps towards putting an execution into Cambridge House. One of the best rejoinders ever credited to Palmerston—which I happen to know to be authentic—must close these Palmerstoniana. Always vain of his appearance and proud of his *belles fortunes*, he never quite gave up his flirtations with young married ladies. Remonstrating with him on this habit, one of his devout relatives, a lady, began by describing it as ungentlemanly; it was also, she said, contrary to all religion; finally, she urged, 'it can never answer.' Then came the incorrigible reply of the gay veteran: 'As to the first point, that is a question of opinion. I think it most gentlemanly. As to religion, I admit the practice of the churches differs. As to its not answering, your ladyship misapprehends the facts, for it never fails.'

Of all Premiers with whom I have been brought into personal touch, Lord Palmerston was the one who to me suggests the fewest associations of Downing Street. The case of Mr Gladstone is exactly opposite; for as social host at his official residence only do I chiefly recall this great and good man. Here, while his memory is still fresh, a current misconception

may perhaps be corrected. Recollecting his own words on the subject, I may say Mr Gladstone was not behind Disraeli in inviting to his State dinners others than guests of Cabinet rank—such, I mean, as men distinguished in science, letters, or art.* The Downing Street dinner in the Gladstonian days most vividly now before me is one whereat physically the largest, socially the most entertaining, guest of the evening was The O’Gorman. This was the typical Irishman of the old school, with little in common between it and the younger patriots of Erin, who, as member for Waterford city, rolled his huge and pleasant presence into and out of the House of Commons. He, like his Downing Street host, as the latter said, was one of the few men still living who could still relish a glass of port. Always in good form, the Major was on that evening brilliant. The reminiscences which, in talk with Mr Gladstone, he suffered to be elicited from himself of Ireland in the old days would have furnished fit additions to Sir Jonah Barrington; they could be reported justly by no one save Charles Lever. During the London season Disraeli’s most characteristic talk, whether he might be in or out of office, was ever reserved for young men of great families and for fine ladies. It was my lot in the early seventies to hear him make his famous ‘extinct volcanoes’ speech at Manchester, and to dine at the same house where he was staying—that of Mr William Romaine Callander. The statesman could never have been in a more agreeably autobiographical vein. He talked much and pleasantly to several who were near him on his Lancashire visits more than a quarter of a century earlier, when he was collecting material for his novels, and was himself in the company of one of his heroes, the George Smythe who suggested so many touches for the character of ‘Coningsby.’ Disraeli’s often-quoted ‘I prefer the peacocks to the primroses’ was uttered on the Hughenden lawn, not to Sir William Harcourt, but to Sir Algernon Borthwick, now Lord Glenesk.

Contrast with these First Ministers of Queen Victoria statesmen filling a like position in other lands which mould their government after the British pattern. The first time I ever saw Gambetta was in a railway carriage on the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean line. His companions were a lady of great natural distinction, still with the traces of beauty about her, though no longer young, whom he treated with a courtesy worthy of a birth and breeding far higher than his own. The other member of the Gambetta travelling-party was a young man, apparently half-secretary, half-body-servant, whose business it was to produce for his chief all the newspapers, as it seemed, known to Europe from one

of those bags which France alone manufactures. These sheets the statesman, who had not yet ‘arrived,’ mastered with great speed; they were then docketed by the secretary, and carefully put away. Soon after reaching Paris I presented to my illustrious fellow-traveller at his apartment a letter of introduction. This was after the fall of the Empire, but long before Gambetta seemed likely to become a very great personage. He was then living very simply in an apartment not very far from the Bourse. He received me in the *demi-toilette* dear to all intellectual workers at their work, and affected specially by Frenchmen *en famille*. Smoking incessantly full-flavoured cigars, never moistening his lips with any liquid, he chatted pleasantly and pertinently with a knowledge of England gained doubtless from his loyal and able follower, Camille Barrère, to-day French Ambassador at Rome, but then responsibly occupied on his chief’s newspaper, *La République Française*. Gambetta was concerned circumstantially to combat the opinion implied, I suppose, in some remark of mine that careers of every kind were more open to all the talents in France than on the other side of the Channel. The observation, however, which has most often recurred to me since was upon Egypt. There was nothing, I think, then to indicate the international future and problems ahead for the land of the Pharaohs, but, apropos of I forget exactly what, Gambetta said something in very significant tones of the day when the political currents of all lands would flow into the Nile.

The next time I was to meet this remarkable man he was in office practically as Premier. He was installed in his official rooms at the Palais Bourbon, where he had asked me to call. The natural dignity of the man suited his general surroundings of decoration and furniture—rather decayed, though, their splendour seemed in the room where he sat. The old pea-jacket, much the worse for wear, had been replaced by such a frock-coat as an English Premier might wear. The cigars in the open box on the table were of a better quality than of old; they struck me as of exactly the same brand as those smoked by Mr Joseph Chamberlain, my mention of whose name to my host with a question as to acquaintance with him elicited no more reply than: ‘*Je l’ai vu.*’ Once more only did I behold this famous Genoese Jew, whose Eastern descent was stamped not less visibly on his features than on his moral and mental nature. This meeting must have been in the summer of 1882, in the winter of which year Gambetta died at Villa D’Avray. He had resigned office in the previous January on the rejection by the Chamber of *Scrutin de Liste*. He was living in a little house, built on the English scheme, in the Rue Didier, not far from the Arc de Triomphe. The ministerial frock-coat had now given place to the old smoking-jacket once more. The tobacco which perfumed the room scarcely

* Mr Gladstone once used words to me conveying, I think, the impression that the initiative was actually taken under his administration. Both statesmen were doubtless ready to take it about the same time.

seemed of the same excellence as at the Palais Bourbon. But Gambetta himself was apparently in high spirits—quite happy with his papers and proof-sheets—of which latter several lay on his table. His last words to me were, as almost his first had been, but in a cheerier tone, on the subject of Egypt. He would never allow the dual control in Egypt to have been the failure which it was popularly accounted. On this occasion his words, just as I rose to leave were: 'We shall yet come out of this business very good friends.'

Shortly after taking my degree at Oxford, I had been asked by an acquaintance of mine interested in the Italian railway system to go to Rome for him to see Count Cavour, the then Premier. I could not accept the offer. The friend who replaced me, and who performed his mission far better than I could have done, told me that the hour appointed by the Italian statesman for his business interviews was 4 A.M. When, therefore, being in Rome in 1886, I secured an appointment with Signor Depretis, I was relieved at knowing it to be a post-meridian, not ante-meridian, meeting. The Italian Premier was then living on the second floor in a block of buildings in a small street near the Corso; everything about him was in the same simple and frugal style that, by its contrast to the environment of English Ministers, had struck me when first visiting Gambetta in his little apartment near the Bourse. At this time Depretis must have been somewhat

over seventy, but his spare, sinewy figure was active and brimful of vitality; for political information he referred me to one of his followers with the operative title *Commandatore* and a surname which I cannot recall. That gentleman gave me the facts which I desired for the moment, and assured me that Signor Depretis would send me some time next year the article I had hoped to secure from him for a periodical I was then editing. But next year Signor Depretis died; the article was never written. The most memorable words uttered to me by the Italian Minister had been: 'Your two statesmen, Mr Gladstone and Lord Derby' (he alluded to the fifteenth Earl, the predecessor of the peer of 1898) 'are the two men who understand Italian affairs better than do any of us.'

I have had the honour to be received by Mr Burt, M.P., in a small Chelsea lodging, as well as by Mr Bright in his hired room in Piccadilly.

Is the day coming when British Premiers, actual or potential, will receive their visitors as both the French and the Italian statesmen received me, with as little of the pomp and circumstance of State in their surroundings as if they had been students in the Latin quarter? When the State pays its members of Parliament, will a step in the Continental direction have been made? Have not the experiences of foreign States been called the prophecies of British posterity?

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER II.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY.

TUDWAY'S uncle lived in a quiet corner, out of the Southwark Road. It was known as Nelson Square. This square, obviously built in the days of naval victory, was devoid of historic interest. A more commonplace square did not exist. No one suspected of heroic deeds had ever lived there; and yet, by reason of its suggestive name, this square had come to be looked upon as a sort of nautical landmark. In fact, one almost expected to discover a statue of Trafalgar's hero, weather-beaten and begrimed with London smoke, in the centre of its large circular garden; but the trees, planted there perhaps in the year Trafalgar was won, formed a natural and poetic substitute. At least it should be conceded that the architect was in a nautical mood when he conceived his design; for some of the houses had windows bulging out like the stern-windows of old battle-ships, and the broad areas beneath them had the appearance of dry docks into which they had run for repairs.

Tudway on reaching London had driven here.

His uncle had rented the top floor in one of these houses for years past. The old skipper was seated beside the fire over his glass of grog.

'Well, Ed'ard'—this was Captain Tudway's invariable form of greeting—'what cheer?'

The captain had been too gouty and rheumatic for many a day for active service. He was a stout, broad-shouldered man, with a quantity of gray hair and beard, his small eyes peering keenly out of these bushy surroundings. He wore a thick pilot-coat at all seasons, tightly buttoned round his chest; and in the capacious pockets was stowed away an exhaustless supply of 'negro-head' tobacco, pipes, lucifer-matches, and such-like useful articles. His room had the appearance of a ship's cabin. The walls were panelled, and a ship's lamp was suspended from the centre of the arched ceiling. There was a ship's compass in the recess of the window, a telescope hung horizontally above the mantelpiece, and a schooner crowding all sails—a model of the *Nancy* on Cablethorpe sands—was scudding over a rough sea under a glass case.

Edward Tudway sat down on the opposite side of the hearth. 'It's blowing a'most a gale,' said he, 'at Cablethorpe to-night.'

'Blowing is it? Why, Ed'ard,' said the captain, 'you've got more cheery news than that for me, I reckon; haven't you?' As he spoke he shut one eye and looked at his nephew knowingly with the other.

Tudway bent his eyes upon the fire and made no reply.

'Well, my lad, here's to Hettie Beek!' the captain went on. 'It was agreed between us to drink her health afore you sailed; weren't it?'

Tudway nodded. 'I'll drink to her,' said he, 'with all my heart!' Still, while he mixed his glass of grog, with the captain's eye upon him, he thought to speak of how Hettie had refused to bind herself to any promise. But he shrank from an avowal that might lead to one spoken word of mistrust. It would be necessary to suppose Captain Tudway as much in love with Hettie as he was himself before he could put the whole situation to him; and to suppose such a thing would, of course, be absurd.

When Hettie's health had been drunk, and Captain Tudway had sat silent for a while, 'There's something on my mind, Ed'ard,' said he, 'and it's been there for years. But secrets ain't the sort of ballast I've a fancy for at my time of life. As it is, I've had the load stowed away a bit too long. Are you a-listening?'

'I'm with you, Uncle Ted,' answered Tudway. 'Something on *your* mind? I would never have suspected it!'

'You're starting on a long voyage to-morrow, Ed'ard,' the captain began, taking no heed of Tudway's comment, 'and afore you steer again into this port o' London maybe there'll have been changes here as elsewhere. I can't abide in this cabin o' mine everlasting. I shall be lifted up the companion-ladder one of these days and dropped overboard. It may happen before you come back; for, like my old ship *Nancy*, stranded at Cablethorpe, I'm a-breaking up.'

Tudway had frequently found his uncle in this mood of late; and although he had made every effort to rouse him out of it, and sometimes succeeded, the mood would invariably recur.

'Now, you've always looked upon me, I'll be bound,' and the captain closed one eye winkingly, 'as a poor man; ain't that about it? Come now!'

'I've never looked upon you as a millionaire,' said Tudway, laughingly.

'Ah!'

As the captain uttered this ejaculation he plunged his hand into one of the pockets of his coat, as if about to draw forth a handful of gold; but he only produced a handful of tobacco, and then a meerschaum pipe, which he began to fill meditatively.

'I'm an old bachelor with no kith or kin,' he resumed, 'yourself excepted. And when you were left on my hands, a penniless young orphan, I began to save money. I didn't begin to save it in any miserly spirit, you'll understand; it was all done with an object. Now, I'll tell you what that object was.'

He took a match from another pocket, lighted his pipe, and then went on. 'Some twenty years ago,' said he, 'Mr Beek brought his daughter Hettie up to town with him for the first time. I took a fancy to that little girl. She was hardly five years old at the time; but I made up my mind, there and then, that she should marry you—some day. I thought when I had saved enough money to buy you a partnership in Mr Beek's house, I would make it part of the bargain that she should be yours. That was my notion. Praps you'd call it a dream. Well—stop a moment. I ain't done yet.'

The captain's words brought to Tudway's recollection his first meeting with Hettie Beek. It had been a case of love at first sight on his part; and yet there had been little or no romance about the time or place. It had been upon the staircase, one foggy November morning, in this lodging-house in Nelson Square. The landlady—who went by the name of Clitherow—had been Mr Beek's housekeeper at Cablethorpe in her spinster days. Captain Tudway had been her lodger ever since she had rented the house. That 'staircase-meeting' between Tudway and Hettie, as he now remembered, had happened on the morning upon which he had 'come off' his first voyage.

'I put by money year after year,' said the captain. 'I was like an old miser over my gold. I used to hoard it up in a sea-chest. And many a night, when Mrs Clitherow and her lodgers were all abed and asleep, I've emptied the bags out here upon the hearth and gloated over my bright guineas. It was all going into Mr Beek's timber and ship-breaking business—all a-going to buy you a partnership and the best o' wives! Ain't my dream coming true? Wait a bit!'

If he had only known this, Tudway thought, even a few hours ago—how easy it would have been to set Hettie's mind at rest! Uncle Tudway a man of wealth! Surely he would help Mr Beek—help Hettie's father—out of his troubles?

'Most men would have blurted all out,' said the captain, winking as though he had been specially wound up for it to-night; 'but I knew better! "Tell that young blackguard," says I to myself—meaning you—"tell that young blackguard that Hettie Beek is the wife for him, and he'd never marry her!" That's human nature. Why, when you left school and I told you that I had made up my mind to put you into the timber-trade, didn't you instantly insist upon going to sea? But I've got you now!'

Thereupon Captain Tudway began to shake with laughter, and to wink and nod so persistently that

his nephew began to have serious fears lest he should 'break up' before he had completed his confession.

'That dream,' the captain resumed when he had had his laugh out—'that dream was the one I mostly had, Edward, when aboard the *Nancy*, seated in my cabin—you know my favourite window on the starboard side. I've dreamt it a thousand times! I've dreamt of you married to that girl—happily married—and a flourishing partner in Beek & Son's house.'

As the captain's words, a minute ago, had recalled to Tudway's mind his first meeting with Hettie, so the parting between them to-day in the captain's cabin recurred. Had they not sat there together, side by side, the embodied spirits of the dream of which Captain Tudway had just spoken? He felt almost tempted, remembering all that the girl had told him about the tottering condition of Beek & Son's house, to make known to his uncle that his dream could never be fully realised. Still he hesitated. Might not Hettie justly consider any communication with regard to her father's affairs as a breach of confidence? Yes; it would be time enough to waken him out of his dream when all hope was gone.

'Well,' said the captain after blowing a cloud or two from his pipe, 'you shall make this one voyage more. Then you must settle down. I've saved enough money at last; and I should like to have it all my own way, just as I dreamt I would, afore I die. Come, my lad, don't look down-hearted! I know what I'm a-talking about. Seafaring is all well and good when you're young and single. But it's better to break ships than

sail in 'em when you've thoughts of brightening the domestic hearth.'

Meanwhile Hettie Beek, after bidding Tudway 'good-bye' at Cablethorpe Station, hastened homeward. She felt the parting more keenly than she could have believed possible an hour ago. Still she did not regret her determination. It might be only a passing sentiment, which all leave-takings are apt to awaken. It was better for him—it was better for both of them that there should be no binding engagement. She quickened her pace, as though that would help her to put the thought of Edward Tudway out of her heart. She recalled to mind her father's trouble—saw him seated at his desk with her brother Gabriel's letter in his hand—and grew eager to reach home. She was well acquainted with the state of her father's affairs; she had of late taken an active part in the timber business; and she seriously feared that some catastrophe might at any time overtake the house.

All was silent within the gates. There was no light in the office windows; and as Hettie crossed the moonlit timber-yard, her face aglow after her gusty walk with Tudway, and her hair in great disorder about her forehead, Jarvis came hurriedly out of the house by a side-door. The look on his face took all the colour from her cheeks.

'Was it bad news?' said the girl, instantly grasping the situation. 'Was it Gabriel's letter?'

'I don't know,' said Jarvis. 'I found your father lying face downward in the office. The letter is still crushed up in his hand.'

Hettie did not wait to hear more. She turned quickly towards the house and went in.

IN PÈRE LACHAISE.

By JOHN STAFFORD.



Of the sojourner in Paris who wearies at whiles of its ceaseless *bruit*—its roar of wheels, its cracking whips, its omnibus hooters, and, above all, its perennial chatter—there is always at his hand a city of another kind

to which he may retreat—a city of many streets and stately edifices, with a population of millions, yet through whose ways and byways he may saunter, hearing no sound but his own slow steps or the song of a bird here and there among the trees; from whose heights he may gaze down on all Paris, and yet hear the beat of his own heart, so still it is and restful on the leafy slopes of Père Lachaise.

To really know the charms of the old cemetery one must go, not once, but many times. And those who do know it rarely go in quest of its quiet alone, or to enjoy its natural attractions—the cool of its avenues, its winding ways, its sylvan nooks. They know that, over and above

these things, there is a subtle glamour there, which, mingling with them, lends to the trees and the flowers—yes, and to the very grass-blades, a something not their own, which makes the foot fall softly and the head to bend with a kind of homage.

As the visitor enters through the great archway from the Boulevard Mémilmontant, and slowly mounts the yew-lined hill to the chapel which crowns it, he already feels something of this, as he sees on either hand of him such names as Rossini, Alfred de Musset, Arago. And, pausing on the hill-top to consider which way he shall turn, he knows that whichever path he may choose will take him by the last homes of other men of light and leading, not in scores but in hundreds. Involuntarily he looks away to the distant dome of the Panthéon; he thinks of Rousseau, Mirabeau, Victor Hugo, wishing, perhaps, that they had been put to rest amid the bosky shades about him rather than in that

dismalest of mausoleums. But as he passes on he remembers that under that sombre cupola, and here beneath the kindly drapery which nature has hung about them, lie most of the stalwarts, who, in their exits and entrances, like shuttles working on the warp and woof of meaner things, have woven for us the extraordinary fabric of modern French history. They have thought and done—are in some sort still thinking and doing in their silent subjective way; and however some of them may have erred, or whatever wrong turnings they may have taken in the moral fog they were groping in, they make, nevertheless, an impressive group of strivers. And after life's fitful fever how well most of them sleep in Père Lachaise! Each in his particular arbour—the green tree-arms stretching protectingly over him, filtering the sunlight and waving back the brusquer breezes—how different it all seems to the great cellars away there in the Pays Latin!

One walks on full of musings; the names about stir the thoughts as the sun does a hive at sunrise. Here in a railed space, with its sturdy box-borders and geraniums and things, lies La Fontaine; and there on the right of him, sharing the same enclosure—were they not friends to the last?—rests the creator of *Tartuffe*. Remembering the famous quartette of the Rue de Vieux Colombier is to wish Racine and Boileau no farther away. 'État 51' says the inscription on Molière's monument. He lived, then, a year less than Shakespeare, to whom in all the world he used to say he would doff his cap. Witty, cynical, handsome Molière! He died in harness, making laughter to the last. And, as if to satirise his own sick health, his play was *Le Malade Imaginaire*! His funeral was scarce better than a *felo-de-se's*. A couple of silent priests, a little string of friends bearing torches—not a chant, hardly a prayer. For why? He was Molière, the king's player. It was the revenge of *Tartuffe*.

Not far away are two other friends who are even more closely united. Their cameo faces, half-way up the lofty obelisk, are turned one to the other, and beneath them are the words, '*Je désire être inhumé dans la tombe de mon ami Manuel.*' It was Béranger's last wish. The mourning multitude which followed him there saw that it was duly executed. The sweetest of Latin singers, he could also be the most sonorous, and not always to the peace of his enemies. Once they caught him and put him in a cage—the prison La Force; but still he sang on, and by-and-by a government fell, cursing him. The restored Louis, not to be ungrateful, offered him reward, but Béranger would have none of it. He went his way to make more poems. He has been called the Tom Moore of France. Both sang of love and fatherland; but the power they wielded was widely different. Béranger could ring out, when the humour took him, like a clarion; Moore was a luttist always. Béranger could rouse a nation,

as his orator-friend Manuel could rouse a mob. Passing by David's tomb will remind us of an instance. The great painter—he was all that in spite of Thackeray's raillery—died an exile in Brussels. His friends sought to take his body for burial in his beloved Paris, but government martinets stopped it on the frontier. Béranger thereupon threw off a terrible song. Louis David now shares with the poet the same necropolis. He lies over by the chapel, having as neighbours such brothers-in-art as Géricault, whose 'Raft of the Medusa' is so familiar to us; Gustave Doré, Ingres, and Corot.

De Musset, like Béranger, had also a last wish: it was to rest under a willow-tree. His comely features, chiselled in marble, show no chagrin that the willow there is no better than a sapling. It is the third or fourth which has been planted, such is the devastation wrought by hero-worshippers. But the little tree, with the geraniums and marguerites about, does its best to make some cheeriness over the bones of melancholy De Musset.

Lingering there, the eye travels to the name of a very different man, the bright, vivacious Auber, the arch-laugh in music, whose *Fra Diavolo* alone makes kindly thoughts for him. Rossini's empty tomb—he lies now at Florence—waves back other tuneful hours at Covent Garden, which most of us may count among the few not lost in the waste of our living. Such reminiscences make more, and one's glance turns to the trees opposite, among which Bellini rests, and Cherubini. Thought, already on the lilt, will find that little pear-shaped corpse quite haunted with old tunings. For Chopin is there too, and through the Ariel of memory will add to the rest *morceaux* of his own nocturnes and melodies till, if you will, the place be as full of 'noises, sounds, and sweet airs' as Prospero's isle.

It is pleasant to rest a while, listening to these things, and looking on at what fancy will do to their measures, the visions it will bring, the figures it will shape and unshape from the fugitive brain-scrap you throw it. But among the pictures which come and go, like the faces over the witches' kettle—dim cathedral, glaring opera-house, twilighted drawing-room, a yellow moon over the trees—ah, Chopin, what fools you made of us!—come others of an impersonal kind, biographical vignettes which these men around have left on all our minds. There is the Parisian *salon*, Heine smiling over at Bellini; the fair lady, amused with the maestro's curls, delicately destroying them with his cane. Not one of them thought that in fourteen days' time poor Bellini, curls and all, would be under the ground at Père Lachaise. Then appears a severer apartment; a short, muscular man there, square-jawed and angry-eyed, as Cherubini turns upon him, half-bitterly: 'Citoyen-General, I perceive that you love only that music which does not prevent you from thinking of your politics.' And the Italian moves

away, as if adding under his breath, 'Why is this man not Midas-eared?' For that little, stout man, Napoleon, had alone, 'mid applauding Paris, belittled his music. And now rises a room in Florence, a litter of books and papers, De Musset writing, George Sand dictating. It is Chopin's doing—he has reminded us of them. But now he appears himself, his piano before him, dreaming through his finger-tips, and making more dreams for his crouching listener, the same George Sand. The tragedy and comedy of those two lives!—they make us weep and smile by turns. The sculptured muse on the composer's tomb sits mourning, lyre in hand. But it is all past now, that sorrowing time. For when Chopin died did he not leave us his better angel? The musician's soul of him, does it not dwell purely among us, one of the 'choir invisible' which is ever urging us to 'larger issues'? One wishes the figure would lift its head as the sick-hearted do at the last burst in the *Marche Funèbre*. The few poor bones she weeps over are not Chopin.

As you turn from the Bellini column, to thread your way to the Chemin Denon, you may notice, half-hidden under bushes, a tiny weather-worn headstone stooping over a thick carpet of ivy. If you bend low it will tell you in its faint way why it is there, and you will straighten yourself, glad again to have found out the grave of such another old friend. For you mind, long ago, before Chopin had ever made you see visions, or Cherubini had lifted you as high as heaven, how St Pierre came to you between the leaves of a book and told you a moving tale. And you are not ashamed to remember now that you had to brush something away as you followed it. But were ever tears sweeter than those which made you blink over the pages of *Paul and Virginia*? Do not some of its scenes cling to you now, as the ivy clings to the patch of earth at your feet? Carlyle calls it somewhere 'the swan-song of old, dying France'; it often enough marks in its way the swan-singing of our own boyhood or girlhood, that wondering, transitional time in our lives which men like St Pierre gently lead us through, kind in their art, in their reticence more kind.

We feel less grateful for the rougher handling later on of such as Balzac, whose grave lies within gunshot of you as you think of him. He was a great artist enough; Nature shows clearly in his mirror—if not beautifully; for, like Géricault, who filled his studio with dead men, Balzac went down to the grim reality of things, and built from them with a free hand. But he is of those who make us wiser and sadder; who tear open June roses to show us their cankers; who rummage in foul places to find us festered lilies. They may mean well, but they take from us as much as they give; we go our way richer, but poorer also, till, perhaps, some truer enchanter restores to us some of our lost heart.

He will do you the turn who spoke the funeral

oration over Balzac to the three thousand people who gathered round to see him put away. Victor Hugo saw life no less truly than the author of the *Comédie Humaine*; but he looked at it from a higher plane, seeing the human prospect in its larger, nobler meanings. He mounted high enough to discern the ideal beyond the real, and he showed us what he saw. He was a greater artist.

Talking of Balzac reminds us of another remarkable man who for quite another motive spent the best years of his life in seeking for the truth of things in the ditches of society as well as on its hillocks—for poor St Simon never mounted much higher. He lies here too, in a plain stone sepulchre not many yards from Hugo's father. St Simonism is as dead as Manichæism; but it would be hard to stand by the last dwelling-place of its founder without a touch of gentle feeling. Living in the thick of the social and moral dust which the Revolution made, little wonder he saw askew; but it was a brave ambition that of his to clear the air and set the world to rights that men might live again and be content. To be daily reminded of his task, his valet was required to awaken him each morning with the words: 'Remember, Monsieur le Comte, that you have great things to do.' In his ceaseless study of human nature he went through every possible experience save dying, and when he was nigh to that—a worn-out, beggared man—his last utterance was: 'It has been imagined that all religion must disappear. But religion cannot disappear from the world; it can only change its form. Do not forget this, and remember that in order to do great things one must be enthusiastic.' He might have said poorer words to the young fellows about him, his few followers. Among them once was reckoned Auguste Comte, but his deeper social feeling and more powerful intellect soon led him to break away and steer a course of his own. His system rests on a wider, a firmer bottom than St Simon's; it is more organic—is a grander conception entirely. But in its sum it illustrates the same truth which came from the weary lips of St Simon: Religion can never disappear; it can only change, evolve, grow to completer religion, as mankind grows to completer brotherhood.

If you will make your way down the slope past the tombs of General Foy and Benjamin Constant to the Chemin Labedoyère, you will find in a shady hollow there, one of the prettiest corners in the cemetery, Comte's own resting-place. There is a bench there standing beside it on which you may sit a while, baring your head in the coolness to catch 'the benediction of the air,' musing the while, as you well may in such a spot, of how one life may condense in itself and express a thousand others. Comte was essentially a summer-up of other men's lives, his own contribution being the explanation of their divided

efforts—revealing, in effect, the long social evolution which threw these up, each in his day, as its manifold instruments. Under Comte's pen the great Human Story grew round as Giotto's O, and whatever be our mental attitude it makes marvellous reading. No known life—nor unknown either—which has made for human progress but has some voice in the chorus which Comte weaved for the first into one vast harmony. It is interesting to remember how he obtained his keynote, and that at least two of those repose near him who helped him to it—Bichat and Gall.

The latter's marble bust stands high on a pedestal between the sepulchres of Monge and Joseph Fourier. The sight of it sends us back to our Corinthian days, when we pored over Combe's *Constitution of Man*, just as the empty grave of Laplace, over by Molière's, brought back the *Vestiges of Creation*, with its lucid exposition of his Nebular Hypothesis. It is many years ago now since Gall made such a noise in Paris, and so irritated Napoleon that he turned on the French savants 'for suffering themselves to be taught chemistry by an Englishman (Davy) and anatomy by a German.' This imperial snarl may have covered a regret that Lavoisier and Bichat had as yet found no worthy successors. It would give his hearers a glimpse of the littleness which lurked behind the strong character of the Corsican. We can see them suppressing involuntary shrugs and glancing one at the other, as much as to say with Talleyrand, 'What a pity such a great man has been so badly brought up!'

Monge, who accompanied the Egyptian expedition to bring home so many treasures, would see Napoleon in larger moments. But Cæsar as he was in the field, we have one witness here to remind us that he sometimes met his match even in those early days of triumph. Sir Sidney Smith lies over in the Chemin des Anglais, and, English-like, he has his epitaph:

In war-like France, where great Napoleon rose,
The man who checked his conquests finds repose.

And so on in naïve, John Bull fashion, which, fortunately for human kindness, few Frenchmen can spell out. The brave Ney, who rests in another part of the cemetery, will recall to us Bonaparte's final overthrow, years afterwards, at the hands of Wellington. Had the Marshal kept his promise to Louis to bring back the man from Elba 'in an iron cage,' that last struggle had perhaps never broken the peace of a June day; but the sight of his old chief—neither he nor his army could withstand the magic of it. *Vive l'Empereur!* Then Quatre Bras and Waterloo. Ney was executed in the Luxembourg Gardens for high treason. 'He who had fought five hundred battles for France—not one against her—was condemned as a traitor.' A sorry business.

Waterloo brings us in a roundabout way to Monge again; for it was he who examined young

Arago at the University of Toulouse; and it was Arago, you remember, who, when he was become 'the Newton of France' and had visited London, could never be induced to look at Waterloo Bridge.

And here, by sheer association, poor Heine comes up again. It is a digression, but let him speak: 'Nothing, however, equalled the gloomy mood which once came over me as I stood on Waterloo Bridge towards evening, and gazed on the water. It seemed to me as if my soul was mirrored there, and was gazing up out of the water at me with all its scars. The most sorrowful stories came to my recollection. I thought of the rose which was always watered with vinegar, and so lost its sweet fragrance and faded early. I thought of the strayed butterfly which a naturalist who ascended Mont Blanc saw fluttering amid the ice. . . . Ah! I felt so sorrowful that the hot tears started from my eyes. My tears fell down into the Thames, and floated on to the great sea.'*

Brilliant young Bichat, whose discovery of the duality of animal and vegetal functions gave such a lift to anatomy, lies near Cuvier and Chénier in the eighth division. His quiet little memorial—'A Xavier Bichat' is all it tells you—like that of Comte, stands out in singular contrast to the run of such things in this cemetery. Cuvier's also. You read his name on a plain stone slab such as you would find in an English churchyard. It suggests the similar stone which commemorates Gustave Doré, over on the hill there. Such simplicity is rare in this grandly-built city of the dead, in which a grateful people often creeds to poor genius or merit a votive honour which wealth might envy.

But though here and there in the cemetery are evidences, more than enough, of vulgar display, bourgeois ostentation, you find, as a rule, much taste and right feeling in the designs of monument or mausoleum. Many of the latter, with their stained windows and marble interiors, are exceedingly attractive. Swept and garnished, and often with fresh flowers on their altar-places to give aid to the other ornaments, they show a loving care for the shrines of dead dear ones beautiful to see.

More striking, however, than any of these, and far more graceful in its Gothic lines, is the great tomb of Abelard and Héloïse, at which one may suitably end up a ramble through Père Lachaise. It stands in a little flower-grown space, all by itself, and the paths around are worn with the feet of pilgrims who have made that their tender pausing-place. Every one knows the story of Héloïse, one of the love idyls, as it is, of all time; and whatever reservations we may have for Abelard, there is not a cynic among us but can feel some stirrings of reverence for that noble woman. The two lie side by side in effigy under a lofty catafalque; and often enough you may see lying with them a red rose or two, which young people have tossed there for the old tale's sake, which time has never done telling.

* *Florentine Nights.*

TOWARDS THE SUNRISE. A TALE OF RUSSIAN JEWRY.

CHAPTER II.

HE had forgotten. To-morrow night had been fixed for the great public meeting when the Kadima would submit their programme of propaganda for the first time to the mass of their co-religionists. Judah, as the chief organiser, felt considerable anxiety as to its success; the blame of a fiasco might fall on him. He was half-sorry he had undertaken his interview with Kronemann for the following day; but there was no help for it now. Bertha might put a wrong construction on his dilatoriness. And moreover, in the cool light of reflection, it seemed more desirable to put his fate to the hazard at the earliest. He shuddered. After all, it was a hazard, and he might lose. Yet there was one comfort even in that. If he lost now, there would be nothing else the losing of which need cost him a single pang. Perhaps that was true happiness, to have suffered beyond the climax.

He had seen very little of the banker; even when he was in the house he showed himself but rarely. And as Judah, the following afternoon, knocked at the door of his study, he suddenly became aware that Bertha's father was comparatively a stranger to him, and that made his task more difficult. But the banker's cheery manner reassured him.

'You are the very man I want to see,' he said as Judah entered; 'in fact, I was going to send for you. Sit down.'

The banker strode silently once or twice across the room. Then he confronted Judah suddenly.

'I should like to ask a favour of you,' he said quite solemnly. 'I want you to marry my daughter. I am perfectly serious,' he went on, noting the young man's look of amazement. 'I have even gone so far as to first ascertain, very discreetly, her feelings on the subject; and while you think over my offer, I will give you one or two reasons which prompted me to it. To begin, then, I liked you from the first, apart from the claim you had on my goodwill. I liked your keeping aloof when another man, relying on his merits, would have battered my walls in. Bertha wrote you that letter at my instigation. The thought of making you her husband came to me the second time you called; otherwise I should hardly have thrown you so much into each other's way. You think I know nothing about you—that I am rash in trusting my only child to a haphazard acquaintance. You are mistaken. A practised reader of character, as I am, hardly needs more than a casual glance or two to draw his conclusions. I inferred you possessed common-sense, backbone, rectitude. That was all I required. I have no sons to keep the house from

passing into strange hands after my death. My name would be forgotten. I want you for my successor. I want the firm of Kronemann & Co. to rank with the first in the world. Call it vanity—I desire to raise for myself a lasting monument. Another point, a matter of superstition perhaps—my own good fortune was the outcome of accident. I was lucky enough to do the founder of the house almost as great a service as you have done me, and married his daughter. I have prospered; by the same token, I prognosticate you will succeed in ratio to our beginnings. You see I have been candid.'

'Oh God, what am I to say?' breathed Judah, with beating heart.

The banker lifted his finger. 'Wait, I have not quite finished; till then reserve your answer. It has come to my ears you are one of the most prominent champions of the so-called National Movement.'

Judah rose eagerly, but the other waved him down and continued:

'In view of that, I want you to give me a guarantee—your word of honour will be sufficient—that you will once for all sever your connection with these hare-brained hobby-riders. The task which I impose on you is too difficult to allow any division of energy, too matter-of-fact to run smoothly alongside of soap-bubble hallucinations and day-dreamings. In short, I want to safeguard it against any possible rival in your affections. That is my only condition; no doubt you will find it easy.'

'No, I do not find it easy,' Judah burst out, battling with his despair. 'You have been very cruel, Mr Kronemann,' he went on more gently. 'You give me a glimpse into Paradise, and then tell me that I can only gain entrance by leaving behind the one thing I held dear on the hither side. Or did you only want to see what a Tantalus looked like?'

'Yes, viewed from that point, it certainly seems a little hard,' reflected the banker. 'Only it is the wrong point. I respect your reluctance; it is good our ideals should die hard—it is what makes life worth living—and therefore, when the time comes, let us be practical.'

'By all means, then, let us be practical,' assented Judah, with a sudden hope. 'Tell me, Mr Kronemann—have you given much thought to the question of our national regeneration?'

'Not much, I admit; I contented myself with listening to its advocacy by others. And what did I hear? Rodomontades in fustian that walked about on stilts to make them look big. And because they walked on stilts, they were fairly easy to trip up.'

'Quite so,' said Judah, his voice quavering. 'I will not presume to put any new aspect of the case before you. I have merely a burning desire to be practical. I will tell you only what I can swear to. I have seen Jewish porters at the railway stations carrying three times their own weight of baggage. I have seen hundreds of Jewish wood-fellers cutting timber in the Lithuanian forests. I have seen droves of Jewish raftsmen on the Vistula working their way miles and miles against the current, and I have seen thousands of Jewish field-labourers harnessing themselves to their ploughs in place of the oxen they had sold to buy seed. You would call these men of muscle, I suppose?'

'Yes,' conceded the banker hesitatingly.

'Again, in the house in which I live there are four students whose gymnasial reports show they were always at the top of their class. There is a little boy who can easily multiply rows of six figures in his head. There is a young artisan who has made the model of a steam-crane without ever having handled a book on mechanics. There is also a hawker to whom six weeks ago I gave ten roubles to set him up, and who has made them into a hundred. All that would argue brains, I believe.'

'I see your drift,' said the banker.

'Please note that this is only the result of my own limited observation. These people are not exceptions—they are specimens. Here, then, you have brains and muscle—some of the material which goes to the making of a nation.'

'Yes, some,' emphasised the banker.

'The rest is merely a matter of organisation—of arrangement,' continued Judah. 'We are sweeping away internal misunderstandings and differences; we are beginning to combine, to collaborate. We are no longer limbs—we are a body. And then there are the necessities of the case. These, of course, are self-evident.'

'No!' exclaimed the banker. 'I will grant you everything but the necessities. This latter-day exodus is not wanted. It is merely the desire to repeat history. Our Jews here are perhaps a little more ground under heel than the rest of the proletariat. If so, it is the penalty they must pay for being as yet only step-children of their country. They must wait and work for their redemption, as their brothers have done elsewhere. Possibly'—he sank his voice and looked round cautiously—'possibly they may not have long to wait. The signs are in the sky. The times are pregnant. What birth they will bring forth no one can tell; probably it will have a baptism of blood—some Jewish blood amongst it. We may not live to see it, but sooner or later deliverance will come—from within. Till then, patience!'

'Ah! patience, patience,' muttered Judah desolately, 'and in the meantime our mother's heart is breaking to see her sons degraded into cattle, her daughters haled by the hair along the highways.'

'There it is, the cloven hoof,' said Kronemann lightly, to loosen the tension that was becoming awkward. 'The sentimentalist revelling in generalities. Do you call that being practical? The man who talks like that is capable of writing his business letters in rhyme.'

Judah stood motionless, his face set, and a haggard wretchedness in his eyes. The banker saw it, and was touched.

'I won't press you for an immediate decision,' he said, laying his hand on Judah's shoulder. 'I shall give you, say, twenty-four hours. That is as much as any man wants—I shall be candid again—to reconcile himself to his good-fortune. By the way, you will find Bertha in the drawing-room; she may help you to your determination.'

Judah waited. 'Is there no compromise possible?' he quavered.

'None—there are two alternatives; you will do well to keep that in mind. It will save you from complicating your methods of reasoning.'

Gropingly Judah made his way up the *escalier*. At the drawing-room door he stopped and listened. Bertha was playing the piece she knew to be his favourite. A wild longing came over him: if his life went forfeit over it he must see her once more.

She turned at the click of the handle and rose quickly; but as she saw his face she hung back, with her hand to her heart.

'You have asked father,' she faltered at last; 'he has refused, and has sent you to me to say good-bye.'

'On the contrary,' he replied hoarsely, 'your father was good enough to give me the chance of refusal.'

And then he told her quickly what had happened. 'You have small reason to be pleased with me,' he ended up. 'I could win you by the stretching out of my arm—and I hesitate because of an hallucination—a day-dream, as your father names it.'

'That only shows your love is worth having,' she said almost inaudibly.

'Suppose, then, I persist in this day-dream?'

'Judah, you will not persist? Oh, say you will not!'

He turned from her with a dumb gesture of despair. She came close to him.

'Listen, Judah,' she whispered. 'I do not call it a shadow—an illusion. To me it is a great, grand reality. Many a time the thought of it has set my nerves tingling; many a time I have said, "Oh that I could help!" Look, I am turning traitress against my own father. Make concessions to his caprice—if only in appearance. Later on, when the irrevocable has happened, you will always find ways and means to be of service to the cause, indirectly'—

He shook his head wearily. 'I am to give my word—you have forgotten that. And then he flamed up. 'You have made one suggestion; I

shall make a second. If my love is worth having, then follow your heart's bidding and none other. You said yourself one may be disobedient in a good cause. Now prove it. You can help the good cause by helping me. Without you I am useless, an empty husk; with you I could achieve miracles. And I promise you, the honour of it shall be yours and yours only. It is in your hands to raise your father a monument a thousand times more durable than the one he dreams of himself. Bertha, I repeat, it is in your hands.'

She listened to him patiently; but her voice was very sad as she replied: 'I have deserved this—I must not complain. I counselled treachery; you counsel open revolt. A few words will answer you. I dare not—for the life of my father, I dare not. A year ago he broke a blood-vessel. Any sudden shock and I tremble for the consequences. Do you want it to be on my conscience?'—She broke off and buried her face in her hands.

'Then nothing remains,' he said in a hollow voice.

'Yes, twenty-four hours of reflection remain,' came from her quickly.

'Twenty-four hours of torture,' he echoed. 'Would to God I had them behind me, which-ever of my two loves they will bury.'

'Judah!'

He saw the passionately uplifted hands and went out. The gesture haunted him. Again and again he tried to put it from him. He wanted his mind clear, crystal clear. He had to think. Think—when his thoughts were so many snow-flakes, whirling wildly in the hurricane of his emotions? No, he would let things be for the present. Later on the decision would come to him of its own accord, without racking, without writhing. This was a useless riot of pain. He must be calm or he would die.

Colourlessly the hours dragged by till it was seven o'clock. Mechanically he made his way to the hall where the meeting was to take place. Vilenski looked at his white, wan face, and asked:

'What! you, Judah? Lamp-fever? Stage-fright? What are we others to say then?'

Judah made a great effort and parried the inquiry. No prying, no questioning, or he must strangle something—himself by preference. As in a dream he watched the huge hall filling steadily. He felt the great, subtle waves of excitement undulating through the assembly, at first only distantly, but presently they came nearer. The first thrill touched his soul, pain-numbing, healing, life-giving. He began to hope again: yes, his decision would come to him in a flash, without a throe. And once he had it in his grasp it might kill him, but he would not let it go. Better a hell of certainty than an ecstasy of doubt.

The greatest Jewish scholar in Warsaw occupied the chair. One by one the speakers rose, gripped

the ear of the audience, and sent their message, blood-warm, down to their hearts. The waves of excitement waxed into billows of enthusiasm. Judah's speech had been left to the last; it was to be the climax, the coping-stone on the fabric that was to be reared that night.

A hush, throbbing with the pulse of its own stillness, held the gathering as he came forward. Every ear, every eye strained lest a word, a movement of face or hand, should escape it. Judah felt the magnetic silence that argued his power; but he himself was dissatisfied; he was wasting breath. This was not what he meant. He was not striving to convince them—he wanted to carry conviction into his own heart. And in that he had failed so far. His utterances seemed to him idle antics of sound. But at last he struck the right note. He touched on the joy of self-surrender, that made a sacrifice of its bleeding heart, and looked on smilingly as on a thank-offering; that gave up life and love because that was the most one can give up, and because the best could be fed and fostered only with what was best. His hearers grew frightened, for this was the first time they had seen a human soul stand before them in its white-gleaming nakedness. Judah had conquered, and so he could sing his song of self-victory.

'The land of Kedem is trembling with joy to its inmost caverns,' rose his psalm; 'its soil is quickening with prophetic gladness, and mightily is Jordan rearing his waters, to pour teeming fruitfulness into her bosom, for that the songs of the Lord shall once more re-echo on his banks, and that the singers' voices might not grow faint for hunger. There is a rustling in the cedars of Lebanon that have been as cypresses in their desolation; their branches are whispering one to the other, "Be joyful—the wanderer is returning home, the outcast is coming into his own again." And in his rock-dwelling Father Abraham is listening night and day, that he may be the first to catch the myriad footfalls of his sons marching eastward. Ay, brothers, up and towards the sunrise!'

Judah stopped, but the vibrating hush continued long after the last word had left his lips. Then came the first ripple of applause that heralded the coming cataract. Already it had gathered itself into moderate fullness; already it had started reverberating; but instead of the cataract it suddenly oozed out into a dull, sullen buzz of consternation:

'Dead, dead!' people were murmuring. 'Heinrich Kronemann is dead!'

Judah caught the words, not once, but a dozen times, as he forced his way out through the way-giving throng. In a quarter of an hour he had reached the mansion. A few gaping quidnuncs were hovering round. Judah stopped one of the footmen who had just come back from an errand. Yes, it was true. A telegram had brought bad

news that evening, and the master had had a stroke. Slowly, very slowly, Judah walked back to his lodgings. He was wondering whether it would be counted against him on Judgment-day that he was glad he needed not give an answer to-morrow. To Bertha he wrote: 'I shall come when you want me.'

It was a month after that she wanted him. They were standing together at the window, peering into the twilight.

'I had no compunction in renewing my suit,' said Judah tenderly; 'it was not inciting you to revolt. Your father's project, even had he lived,

has become an impossibility. The government monopoly that wrecked his investment and broke his heart took good care of that. You are not going counter to his will.'

'Do you know, Judah,' she said solemnly, 'I sometimes am afraid his death was God's visitation on his purlblindness.'

'Afraid? You should exult—exult that his death has not been useless, if it only strengthens our belief in the Providence that watches our destiny. You can say then he died for our cause. He shall have his monument. His memory shall go with us as we struggle towards the sunrise.'

THE SEA-OTTER.



THE recent fur-sales in London the fur of the sea-otter was quoted at an average of £56 per skin. The animal, when it is alive and wearing the fur itself, is from three to five feet in length from nose to tail-tip, though the skin lying upon it in loose folds, the actual 'pelt,' is of a fair size. Still, sea-otter skins at £56, whilst seal-skins are worth from £3 to £6, cannot be considered economical wear. Ever since Behring, sailing from Russia, discovered Alaska, and found its natives clad in otter-skin, this fur has been the prime object of the pelt-hunters' desire. Sable, marten, mink, and even ermine can be trapped or shot without extraordinary trouble; seals are driven inland like fools to be slaughtered and skinned at their captors' leisure. But the sea-otter must be sought diligently as the diamond, for three centuries of experience have made him wise.

Upon the map of North America may be seen, jutting from the southern corner of Alaska—which is the north-west corner of the continent—Alaska, a peninsula which breaks off into a chain of islands called the Aleutians. Just where the peninsula ends and the islands begin, a point may be noticed marked Belkovsky. This is the headquarters of the sea-otter hunters, and between here and Chernaboor Island to the south and Saanak Island to the south-west the bulk of the sea-otters are taken. Thoroughly impressed with the value of his own skin, the sea-otter takes care of it by living far away from the mainland, sleeping, with one eye open, upon the floating weed-beds or a sea-washed reef exposed to the full fury of the North Pacific. At the slightest sign of the approach of man he dives deep, and stays below for twenty minutes at a time. Sometimes a stray otter may be shot from the land as he plays in the surf; but the chief methods of his capture are 'the surround' and clubbing. In the former case a party of Aleutian islanders are conveyed to Saanak, there to encamp for two or three months. Woe to the hunters if the wind

be off the shore, for then no fire may be lit to make the beloved tea, no pipe of tobacco smoked, or the hope of a capture would be vain. For the otter is all eyes and ears and nose when alive; all fur when dead. Upon a calm day the hunters paddle gently over the sea in their skin canoes, keeping an eager eye upon the rolling surf for a sign of the prey. A hunter sees an otter and makes a quiet signal to his mates; like a flash the quarry has dived. Raising his oar aloft, the man who found the otter remains as a buoy above the place of the animal's disappearance, while his mates form in a huge circle, with him for centre. In twenty minutes, at most, the otter comes up again in sight of some of the canoe-men. A frightful yell drives the poor brute below again before he has had time to fill his lungs. Shortly he is again seen, and the process repeated, till at length his body is so gas-inflated that he cannot sink, and falls a prey to the lucky hunter whose spear first pierces that too, too rich coat of his. Luck varies, and the sea-otter is yearly rarer and more shy; but, if fortunate, each hunter may have from two to five skins for the traders as the result of his three months' catch.

To be a successful hunter requires a Spartan scorn of comfort, huge patience, keenness of vision, and readiness of resource, as well as great dexterity in the handling of a risky craft of the nature of a coracle, and an intimate knowledge of your quarry's habits which it requires a lifetime of observation under trying conditions to gain. 'The surround,' then, is no joke, but clubbing is next-door to suicide. The hunters encamped upon Saanak have been for a day or two prevented by a howling gale from doing anything save sleep or smoke. One or two of the men, knowing, seemingly by instinct, that the gale has almost blown itself out, prepare for a clubbing expedition. They also know that, much distressed by the weather, many sea-otters will be sleeping, with their heads buried in the sea-weed beds about the rocky, wind-swept islands of the Chernaboor group. To-morrow, the gale over, the otters will

plunge again into the ocean. The hunters, therefore, lash their flowing waterproof garment to the edge of the well of their light canoe, and thus, like a centaur of the sea, half-man, half-boat, they paddle out from the islands' shelter and are whirled away like straws before the blast. Should they, in the dark and turmoil, miss the islands some score of miles away, they are carried out into the ocean to certain death.

If, on the other hand, they make their haven, they land and creep, club in hand, over the rocky coast to the ocean-swilled reef where the otters sleep. The roar of the gale drowns the sound of their approach, and the poor otter is a mere 'pelt' before he knows of his danger. Scores of otters have been killed in one night by a club-man or two. But otter-clubbing is not a means of livelihood likely to become generally popular.

CURIOSITIES OF STAINED GLASS.

By E. R. SUFFLING.



EVERY phase of art has its beauties, its blemishes, and its curious features either of manipulation or anachronism; and in these matters, especially the latter, stained glass is no whit behind other branches of the fine arts.

Like nearly every other luxury of civilised life, stained glass originally came from the East, gradually—very gradually—working its way westward from its birthplace, Byzantium. Italy received the art, then in its crude state, and nursed it tenderly for many long years, passing it still farther westward to Marseilles, and from thence it found its way to Paris—then a small but smart town, the centre of French power and learning.

It is not known with any certainty when stained glass was first used in England; and it is believed that no examples earlier than the twelfth century are extant in this country, those examples being of a very poor mosaic of somewhat inharmonious colouring—gaudy reds and blues greatly predominating. But it is not our purpose to trace the rise and decline or the resurrection of the art of glass-painting, but simply to note curious phases and anachronisms connected with it.

Probably the early modes of producing a coloured window were in themselves exceedingly primitive and crude; but of their manner of working, the monks, who were the first glass-painters, have left us but little written evidence. But this we know: they had neither brushes, diamonds for cutting the glass, nor mills for turning out the lead for glazing with. Still, it must be confessed they turned out some very effective work, much of which can be reverently admired at the present day.

For brushes they used certain feathers from the woodcock—little spear-shaped feathers coming to a very fine point; and with these bound to wooden handles they were enabled to do very fine outlining and cross-hatching.

The lack of brushes was doubtless the reason for the early monks leaving out all shadows and confining themselves merely to beautiful outlines.

Shading came with the advent of brushes, in the late fourteenth century.

Diamonds for cutting glass were not introduced till the reign of Elizabeth, at which period stained glass was declining; and before that era every piece of glass which went to form a window had to be cast in little clay moulds, and afterwards chipped with an iron instrument, called a 'grozing iron,' so as to properly fit into its assigned place.

Leads were all cast in iron moulds, and were consequently tremendously heavy and clumsy in comparison with fret-lead turned out so neatly by modern machinery.

Reverting to glaziers' diamonds being unknown before the end of the sixteenth century, the writer has on several occasions been able, with this knowledge (and other expert signs) to discover frauds in so-called *ancient* stained glass. Just one instance. A pawnbroker of Canterbury, for the sum of thirty pounds, purchased six panels of painted glass which he was assured came from Canterbury Cathedral, and were of genuine fourteenth-century work. A clever story of how these panels had been removed from the cathedral was concocted by the clever but unscrupulous seller, and the man of Lombardy paid for the panels; but the sudden disappearance of the seller caused him to be suspicious of his bargain. To set his mind at rest he would have an expert's opinion, and applied to the writer for that purpose. The glass was accordingly sent for inspection, and, to the poor man's chagrin, I was compelled to show him how cleverly he had been deceived. On removing several of the sections of glass from the lead it was at once apparent that each piece had been neatly cut with a *diamond*, and the glass itself very cleverly *antiquated* by manipulating it on hot plates with hydrofluoric acid, splashes of stain, and the many 'fakements' known to the clever gentlemen who produce *genuine* glass of any age, with which they 'salt' the pawnbrokers' and old curiosity dealers' shops all over the kingdom. Readers should beware of those beautiful little mediæval medallions of Flemish glass which can be picked up at our seaport towns or in the cottages of Holland for a mere song. The writer has sent

many a purchaser of these *ancient gems* disconcertedly away vowing dire vengeance upon their producers if only the culprits could be found! But they never are; the secret is too well kept.

Much of a startling historical nature may often be learned from the careful surveying of an old window; and probably for quaintness of conception and the transmittment of *whistoric* facts the windows in St Neots Church, Cornwall, are unique. Every one knows the tragic death of Abel; but who can declare how the guilty Cain ended his career? One of the windows at St Neots can expound it for you, for the event is depicted from a very ancient legend. After Cain had slain his brother he fled into the wilderness, and, living apart from his parents, became an outcast. One day Lamech, who was fond of hunting, sallied forth, with a lad to act as game-carrier, to procure some sport. By-and-by the lad noticed some large, hairy animal in a copse, and urged his master to shoot quickly before it could escape. Lamech drew his bow, and after a short interval out rolled Cain transfixed by his kinsman's arrow! One compartment of the window depicts this scene. As the crossbow was not invented for about fifty centuries after Cain's death, there appears to be a slight discrepancy of time somewhere.

In another window in this church are panels representing the creation of the world; and the Almighty Architect is shown, after making four little tows in the style of those seen in modern toy Noah's arks, in the act of setting out the starry firmament *with a huge pair of compasses*!

Then we have the Life of St Neot, which takes up the whole of the compartments in a four-light window to represent it. Among the curious events in the life of the Cornish saint is the following: The saint receives a visit from an angel, who, for the holy man's sustenance, places three fish in the well in which he daily performs his ablutions. He is enjoined never to catch more than one fish at a time, and cook it for his meal; and so long as he does this the well will always be miraculously supplied with the trio of goldfish.

Another panel shows the saint ill in bed, and a new servant, trying to please his sick master, is cooking *two* of the fish. On being presented to the saint he is much alarmed, and orders the servant (shown in another compartment) to throw back the broiled fish into the well again. This the servant does; and another picture portrays the fish swimming about as gaily as if they had not suffered the martyrdom of St Lawrence a few minutes before.

Anachronisms in church windows are somewhat numerous, especially in the matter of costume and surroundings. As the great masters among oil-painters depicted their saints in the costume of their own country at the epoch in which they themselves lived, so glass-painters may be credited with the same palpable blunders. A Madonna of

the fifteenth century is, in Germany, dressed in German costume and her features are German; an Italian window will have an Italian Madonna from hair to foot; and the Flemish painters depict her of buxom proportions and dressed in Flemish bodice and head-dress.

A curious instance of this eccentric use of mediæval costume upon saintly persons who lived fifteen centuries previously may be seen at Gouda in Holland, where some of the apostles are wearing slouch-hats *à la* Boer of South Africa. One of the windows in Gouda church represents 'The Last Supper,' and the thirteen persons usually shown (hence the absurd superstition of ill-luck attending one of thirteen who dine together) are augmented to fifteen by the entrance of the King of Spain, who gave the window, and his Queen. St Peter with his chamberlain's staff of office is introducing this sixteenth-century couple to our Lord! Could bad taste and intrusiveness be carried further?

A still more curious anachronism as to alteration of time was in the case of a window painted some thirty years since for a convent in Ireland, by which the first and nineteenth century were made to join hands. It came about thus: A certain matronly superioress of a newly-formed convent, being anxious to make her order appear as old as possible, gave instructions for a 'Via Dolorosa' window to be painted; and among the crowd was to be shown a nun in the costume of her *new* order with a *crucifix* suspended from her neck. This work was actually carried out, and the window was duly fixed, showing the Saviour *carrying* the cross, while the nun was showing by her crucifix an event which had *not yet taken place*! Pressure was brought to bear, and the crucifix was removed; but the nineteenth-century nun, I believe, still remains a spectator of the event which took place about A.D. 34.

Clever ideas are sometimes embodied in windows, of which two instances must suffice. The commonly accepted idea of our Lord receiving the vinegar whilst upon the cross is by means of a sponge, dipped in the liquid, held aloft upon a reed or staff; but in an old window our Lord holds the reed in His mouth and sucks the vinegar (or sour wine) from a saturated sponge held up by a compassionate attendant.

Another capital idea of a mechanical kind is shown in a west of England window. The subject is Noah taking provisions into the ark. He is a gigantic person, standing at a port-hole, from which to the shore is an inclined plane made from a board of wood. Noah is shown hauling a tremendous barrel (probably a tierce of beef) up this plank by means of two ropes, which, being fixed to the side of the vessel, are carried under the barrel, then over it, and the free ends rest in Noah's hands. Never mind thinking, as you look at the scene, that the barrel is four times as large as the port-hole Noah is about to try

and pull it through—that is his affair; but note the capital use of two powers, the inclined plane and the leverage of a circular mass by two ropes.

Many years ago (less than forty) a charitable lady was importuned by the head of an English college to place a painted window in the college chapel, and at length, wearied with being so repeatedly asked, she yielded, stipulating only that she should choose her own subject, and that the window should not be viewed until the proper day arrived for its unveiling. In due time the window was painted and fixed; and when the veiling cloth was removed, behold she had chosen as her biblical subject Job plagued with boils, and Job's face was a very fair representation of the master who had plagued the lady. Needless to say the window was removed, and another subject inserted at some one else's expense, probably that of the master.

Many curious blunders have been perpetrated by stained-glass draughtsmen, and either inadvertently or knowingly carried out by the actual painter of the glass itself (for the two artists are of distinct branches of glass-painting); the following having come under the writer's personal observation. In a window sent for exhibition from Canada—subject, 'The Last Supper'—our Lord, in the act of blessing the bread, exhibited on His raised hand *five* fingers and a thumb!

On one or two occasions six toes have been noticed on one foot and four joints have been painted on one finger. Then there are cases where persons have received the distinction of having two left or two right feet; and in one window in a London church a 'foolish virgin' has two hands but only one visible arm!

Such instances might be greatly multiplied—for they are numerous—when patrons insist on having a window fixed at such an early date as to preclude proper attention being bestowed upon minor details of anatomy!

Besides saints and other holy and secular persons being rendered in glass, animals are frequently introduced. It is usual to show the head of a cow in the 'Nativity,' and the ass is usually associated with the 'Good Samaritan' or 'The Flight into Egypt;' but even the pig, that unclean animal of the Bible, has also come down to us through several centuries in all the glory of stained glass, and may be seen in the east window of Cartmel Fell Church, Westmorland, as an attendant upon Good St Anthony, whose battered figure has survived the blasts and frosts of five hundred years.

Centuries of immobility cause many curious growths upon the back of glass, which in time becomes deeply pitted and half-eaten through by the chemical action of acid in the atmosphere, and which no clever forger of glass has yet been able to imitate so as to deceive the eye of the connoisseur. Moss, lichen, and small plants are frequently found flourishing in the decayed

portions of antique glass; and the writer, in restoring the fifteenth-century glass of a church in Kent, actually removed several tufts of grass nearly three inches long.

Whilst restoring a window from the midland counties, a large lump of solder attracted his attention; and, being flat and circular, he had the curiosity to cut it open, when he discovered a silver coin as large as a two-shilling piece, and of the reign of Charles II., embedded in the hard mass. Probably the window had been ransacked during the reign of the Merry Monarch, and the glazier, in the fullness of his heart at receiving a good order, placed the coin in its curious hiding-place, so that the lucky finder (myself) might drink 'a health unto his Majesty.'

Sometimes difficulties occur in carrying out certain incidents in a biblical subject, and such a dilemma occurred when the writer painted the very large east window for St George's Cathedral, Sierra Leone. The Bishop had stipulated for as many black men to be introduced into the various subjects as possible; and among the scenes was 'The Resurrection,' which of course brought in a number of Roman soldiers. Now came the artist's dilemma. Could he draw a Roman soldier with a black face with any warranty of correctness? He argued to himself: 'The Romans conquered nearly all the known world, and probably pressed Ethiopians into their service.' Not to be without extraneous help, he sat down and wrote to several clerical friends, but unfortunately applied to an even number, and received four replies 'yea' and four 'nay,' so that he was as far from a true solution of his difficulty as before. Acting, therefore, as his own chairman, he gave his casting-vote 'yea,' and the negro in Roman armour duly appeared in the window, much to the joy of the Sierra Leonians at seeing a brother in such martial array.

It must not be forgotten that along the north coast of Africa the Virgin Mary is frequently depicted as a *black* woman!

TWILIGHT IN MY GARDEN.

O PURPLE twilight! from thy dim recesses
Pale Memories steal, and shape themselves anew;
Soft breezes stir and lift fair phantom tresses,
Tears mingle with the sacramental dew,
And shadowy lips are wreathed with tender smiles,
And loving hands shine faintly through the gloom;
'Tis not alone the roses' fragrant hearts
That flood the dewy dusk with rare perfume.

The loved and lost with noiseless feet are straying
Among the garden's old familiar walks;
I wonder, do they hear the fountains playing
And see the lilies swaying on their stalks?
O twilight-time! when all earth's jars and fret
Die out, and quiet reigns on every hand,
Who knows but for a little space, perchance,
The dear ones slip from out the 'Summer-Land'?

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

EVER since the Poor Law system was established in this country, provision has been made for the support of the aged and of such as are unable to work, either by granting them outdoor relief, or, in the cases where that is found insufficient, by receiving them into the workhouse, where food, clothing, and all that is necessary for their maintenance in health and comfort are supplied at the public charge. The number of persons thus supported forms a varying but always a considerable percentage of the population, and the expense thus incurred is a heavy burden on the resources and industry of the community.

While it is true that persons in various ranks of society are compelled through accident or by stress of circumstances to seek assistance from the poor-rate, it is at the same time found that every one who prizes his independence at its just value shrinks from the idea of asking relief from the parish. All classes of workmen, skilled and unskilled alike, and all persons above that rank of life, endeavour to place themselves in a position in which they will be able to maintain themselves without drawing upon funds which are commonly considered the last resource of the distressed.

The thrifty members of the community usually provide against a rainy day, and the attacks of sickness to which all are liable, by opening an account with a savings-bank or by joining a benefit club. Since the savings-bank has been made a department of the Post Office it has been placed within the reach of every one, and great and ever-increasing use has been made of it; while benefit clubs, with their sick and funeral funds, have furnished their members with means on those occasions when they prove of the greatest service to them and their families.

Before the passing of the Friendly Societies Act of 1875 benefit clubs were of two kinds—the permanent and the terminable. In the former class, which includes several old and well-known institutions, the weekly payments of a member

ensured him sick pay during illness, and a sum of money payable at his death which covered the expense of his funeral. As long as the member made his payments regularly he secured these two benefits; but it was perfectly understood that, however long a member kept up his payments, he obtained no further claim upon the large accumulated funds of the society, which were the sole property of the capitalists who owned the concern, and who reaped an ample return for their investments by the careful manner in which a body of managers conducted the business in their behalf. On the other hand, the terminable benefit clubs were also unsatisfactory. The members of these clubs were the sole owners of all the money belonging to their club; but the clubs were exposed to two risks, either of which might prove fatal to their existence. Clubs of this description were generally local in their operation, so that when an epidemic of sickness had to be met, and the means at their disposal were not sufficient for the emergency, the club came to an end. Again, if an ample sum of money was laid by as a reserve fund to meet such a contingency, the members were tempted to dissolve their club and share the money among themselves; thus a fund which should have been a pillar of strength to the club proved the instrument of its destruction. Such was the constitution of the two classes of benefit clubs which offered a sick and a funeral fund to their members before the passing of the Friendly Societies Act of 1875; but that act permitted a great and important change to be effected in these clubs.

What the act of 1875 effected was this—it permitted what was good in the permanent and terminable clubs to be combined. In other words, it allowed a club to be permanent, and, at the same time, it secured all the money of the club for the sole benefit of its members.

As soon as the act of 1875 was passed the late Mr George Holloway drew up a set of rules and registered a benefit club for Stroud, which secured, in addition to the usual sick and funeral funds,

an old-age pension. This was a new principle in benefit clubs, and the inhabitants of Stroud accepted the boon with a readiness which has been described as extraordinary. This was, no doubt, partly due to the intelligence of the skilled operatives engaged in the woollen manufacture of the west of England, and partly to the able advocacy of the founder of the club. Seventeen years subsequent to the establishment of the club Mr Holloway wrote that if the industrial classes would only avail themselves of the permission given them to establish benefit clubs on the new principle, 'there would soon be a perceptible decrease of pauperism, which so disgraces this prosperous country, rates would be correspondingly reduced, and the rising generation of working men would look forward to comfortable independence in their old age' (Letter in *National Review*, March 1892).

An incident in the history of benefit clubs gave unexpected publicity to the scheme adopted in Stroud. In the autumn of 1877 the Right Hon. W. E. Forster, then President of the Local Government Board, and who had the friendly societies under his jurisdiction, was invited to address an Oddfellows' meeting. While praising that society for the good work it was doing, he pointed out that their work was by no means complete, as it did not touch the question of help for old age. He thereupon announced that, in order to encourage self-help among operatives, he was prepared to give £50 in prizes for the best essays by members of benefit clubs calculated to effect this object. Of the three successful essays, one was written by Mr Holloway; and as they were afterwards published, the plan proposed by him—which was already in full working order—was in this way made widely known.

As a mark of respect for the good service he had done to the town and neighbourhood the electors of Stroud chose Mr Holloway to represent them in parliament. From his special knowledge of the subject he was nominated a member of the parliamentary commission appointed to examine Mr Chamberlain's proposal to grant help in securing old-age pensions; but, as the proposal excluded payment during sickness, Mr Holloway withdrew from the commission, as he was convinced that such a scheme would not be acceptable to the persons whom it was sought to benefit. The commissioners began their inquiry in due course, and examined all the schemes brought before them which proposed to combine State aid with the contributions of individuals to secure these pensions. The report of their completed work has just been issued, and in it they declare that no plan they have considered which is based on the principle of supplementing the savings of the industrious with parliamentary grants would be workable. The whole question, in fact, is judged by them to lie outside the sphere of practical politics. This report has been widely commented upon

and criticised, and Mr Lionel Holland, M.P., has reviewed it in a small volume, *Suggestions for a Scheme of Old-Age Pensions*.

The Stroud scheme, which comprehends a sick fund, a funeral fund, and an old-age pension is perfectly simple and intelligible. A choice of six rates of payment is offered, beginning as low as a halfpenny a day, and reaching as much as threepence a day. Suppose the rate of a penny a day is chosen; this amounts to sevenpence a week, and two shillings and fourpence a month. The regular payment of this entitles a person who enters at any age between sixteen and thirty to sick pay of ten shillings a week, and his proportionate share of the capital of the club, which is calculated at the close of each financial year. The subscription to the funeral fund, which is a small item, is collected independently. When a member reaches the age of thirty his regular payment of sevenpence a week is increased each succeeding year by the net sum of sixpence per annum; thus in his thirty-fifth year he pays two shillings and sixpence extra, at forty years five shillings extra, and at fifty years ten shillings extra. These extra payments are necessary inasmuch as the average sickness increases as a member advances in years. The official tables show that the liability to sickness between sixteen and thirty is nearly stationary, and averages 6½ days per annum; above thirty the liability increases every year, the average being 7½ days; at forty it is 9 days, and at fifty it is 12 days. In the case of a member whose subscription is twopence a day, his extra payments to meet sickness are twice as much as those of the member who subscribes one penny a day, and he is entitled to twenty shillings a week of sick pay; in the case of a member whose subscription is threepence a day, his extra payments are trebled, and he receives thirty shillings a week sick pay.

At the end of each financial year a valuation of the property of the club is made, and the whole of it is divided among the members in proportion to the rate of their subscriptions—that is, the member who has paid one penny a day receives one share, and those who have paid twopence and threepence receive two and three shares respectively. The money is divided, but it is not distributed, and each member has a pass-book in which the money to which he is entitled is entered. A member who pays one penny a day may anticipate an accumulation of wealth on the following scale:

In 10 years.....	£12 11 5
" 20 "	33 0 9
" 30 "	66 7 7
" 40 "	120 13 7
" 50 "	208 1 8

At the age of sixty-five a member's connection with the club ends, unless he desires to keep up his payments to the funeral fund, and secure the benefit which thence accrues. When he leaves the

club he finds himself the possessor of about £200, which he can invest if he pleases in the purchase of an old-age annuity from government which will bring something like £20 a year as long as he lives. Those members who have paid twopence and threepence a day to the club will be able to secure annuities of £40 and £60 respectively.

A member who for any cause wishes to leave the club may do so on forfeiting his two last years' shares of the surplus funds by way of compensation.

Such is an outline of the manner in which the Stroud club is managed. In addition to the usual sick and funeral funds, it secures to its members old-age pensions without asking a farthing from the parish rates or the national exchequer.

An account of the Stroud Benefit club having reached Tunbridge Wells, it was resolved by a small number of the residents in that town to establish a similar society in the south-eastern counties. This was done in 1881, and there are now twenty-five agencies at work, with a membership of about two thousand. A few modifications of the original Stroud scheme have been made, the most important of which is an advantage to

the members and a credit to the sagacity of 'The Men of Kent' who devised it. In the Stroud club, if a member desired, for any reason, to get a portion of the money placed to his credit and due to him, he could only do so by withdrawing from the club altogether, or by waiting till he reached the age of sixty-five, when his connection with the club came to an end. In the Tunbridge Wells club, a member is allowed to take out the whole of the capital that belongs to him, except four pounds, and still retain all the privileges of membership. Permission to withdraw a sum of forty or fifty pounds, which a member may require to assist him in purchasing a cottage or extending his business, is an obvious advantage. Other modifications will probably suggest themselves as these new benefit clubs are established in other towns and districts of the country. The fundamental idea of the scheme, however, which is provision for old age, will doubtless be jealously maintained; and the result of a general adoption of this class of clubs will be a comfort to the thrifty and industrious, the outlook for their declining years will be brightened, and the dread of the workhouse, which haunts so many, will be taken away.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER III.—RUTH.

THE letter from Gabriel Beek, which Hettie had given her father, had helped to confirm her fears. Her brother had confessed to an 'unlucky speculation' with the three thousand pounds; and the old ship-breaker, with his business affairs in dire confusion, had not had the strength to confront the pending disaster. From the moment that Jarvis had found him lying in an unconscious state upon the office floor Mr Beek had uttered no coherent words. Before morning broke he had breathed his last.

Some weeks went by. No further news of Gabriel reached Cablethorpe. It was reported—and the report was traced to lawyer Burtenshaw—that the ship-breaker's son had gone abroad, and would never set foot inside the gates of the timber-yard again. But as to what had actually become of Gabriel Beek, or what would become of him, nobody seemed to possess any very precise information.

One winter's day Mr Burtenshaw, presenting himself at the gates, was conducted into the private room of his late client. That grim smile was again on his face. Is it possible that he recalled to mind a certain gusty day in autumn? He stood at the window, raised his *pince-nez* deliberately, and looked down upon Beek & Son's timber-yard. In a field beyond the yard an

auction sale of ship-wood was going on. Jarvis, who was still 'Beek's manager,' was stepping round the field, followed by a crowd of men who were bidding against each other. Lot after lot, piled up in a separate timber-heap, was being 'knocked down.'

Presently Hettie Beek appeared on the scene; and, to Mr Burtenshaw's surprise, the girl stepped into the manager's place as auctioneer. She took the walking-stick with which Jarvis had been knocking down the lots, and, stepping on to a pile of ship-wood, began to conduct the sale. Jarvis left the field.

A minute later he entered the office. Mr Burtenshaw was still watching Hettie with apparent interest. He dropped his glasses and glanced round.

'Well, John, you want to see me, I understand,' said the lawyer. 'What can I do for you?'

John Jarvis was a dark, good-looking fellow of twenty-eight. The weeks that had gone by since Mr Beek's death had altered his face, as the lawyer observed. He had grown more stern and determined. He seemed fully aware that the onus of Beek & Son's affairs had devolved upon him. While occupying the post of head-clerk, during Mr Beek's lifetime he had never asserted himself. Lawyer Burtenshaw, as he followed John's glance towards the 'auction field,' became

confident that the manager was contending for something more vital to himself than the mere reconstruction of the dead ship-breaker's ruined house.

'A chance has occurred, Mr Burtenshaw,' said Jarvis, 'of doing a stroke of business. A little ready money is needed.'

'What's the business?' said Mr Burtenshaw.

Jarvis drew a note-book from his pocket. A number of old hulks, he explained to the lawyer in detail, were offered for sale at Grimsby. If purchased at once, brought down to Cablethorpe by tug, and broken up and sold for ship-wood, a handsome profit would accrue.

'How much do you want?' said the lawyer.

Again Jarvis consulted his note-book, and then named a sum.

'Indeed! And now, perhaps,' pursued Mr Burtenshaw, 'you'll tell me, my friend, why you come to me? I'm not a money-lender.'

'You've advanced money to the firm,' said Jarvis. 'We are deeply in your debt. A few contracts might lift us out of our difficulties.'

'Ah! Now I'll tell you what it is, John!' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'You have got it into your head—possibly because Mr Beek was an old client of mine—that I'm ready to put his house in order. You never made a greater mistake. What right have you to suppose such a thing?'

Jarvis remained discreetly silent.

'I am ready to admit, however,' said the lawyer, 'that I have a thorough belief in your business capacities. I will even go so far as to say, supposing Beek & Son was transformed into a company, with you as managing director, I might be tempted to put capital into it. But it's useless to speak of that.'

'Why useless, sir?' said John, with an eager look.

'You would never agree to the terms,' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'I should impose very stringent conditions.'

'Let me know them,' said John.

Mr Burtenshaw looked thoughtful.

'If you are as shrewd,' said he, 'as I give you credit for being, you will have almost guessed the conditions. Perhaps you think that I have an affection for this Beek family—do you?'

'No affection, at least, for Gabriel Beek,' said Jarvis.

'Have you?' said the lawyer snappishly.

An angry flash lit up John's eyes.

'Mr Burtenshaw,' said he, 'you cannot be ignorant of the fact that Gabriel has stood in my way from first to last! I have been the bone of contention, so to speak, between him and his father for years. He did everything in his power to turn Mr Beek against me. But I've managed to hold my own. From the time I was taken into Beek & Son's service, as a boy in the timber-yard, I have risen step by step. Gabriel Beek's

opposition spurred me on! The business is now practically in my hands. What is Gabriel Beek to me? If he showed his face at the gates—if he put one foot into the timber-yard—I would do my best to drive him forth. I have good reason to hate him!' He clenched his hands as he spoke, as though to emphasise his passionate sense of resentment.

Mr Burtenshaw smiled approvingly. Then he went to the window. The sale of ship-wood was finished. Hettie had disappeared. 'You hate the fellow, do you, John?' said he, fixing a keen look on the manager.

'Yes!'

'You've another reason to hate him than you have told me of,' the lawyer insisted. 'Is that your secret?'

'Perhaps. At least,' said John, 'I would rather not speak of it just now.'

Mr Burtenshaw rose and rested his hand on John's shoulder. 'My friend,' said he soothingly, 'we'll speak of it another time. I'll see what can be done about the money. You shall hear from me. Good-night.'

The wintry day was closing in. Mr Burtenshaw was gone. Jarvis lighted the lamp over the old ship-breaker's desk, and seated himself there with a sense of exaltation strong upon him. He knew—though the lawyer had been careful not to commit himself—that Mr Burtenshaw had long striven to get the firm into his power. Nor was it purely for the sake of greed. A sense of intense repulsion had existed between Gabriel Beek and the lawyer for years past. It had only needed a calamity such as the present one, as Jarvis conceived, to make Mr Burtenshaw complete master of the situation.

A bond of sympathy—the mutual hatred of Gabriel Beek—had made it possible for Jarvis to work in harmony with lawyer Burtenshaw. But it must not be supposed that Jarvis would, on that account, have condescended to listen to any unscrupulous conditions. Nothing was further from his thoughts. No brilliant promise of wealth would have tempted him to act contrary to the interests of the old house. And yet he was somewhat dazzled, just for the moment, by the ambitious thoughts that began to crowd his brain. In a few weeks' time, at the utmost, the business of Beek & Son would belong to him! He took up one of Mr Beek's pens, corroded with the ink with which Mr Beek had written last, and wrote across a sheet of paper, '*Beek and Son, Limited. John Jarvis, Managing Director.*' Then he leant back in the chair and contemplated the words with a look of stern purpose, indenting the penholder deeply with his teeth. And so lost in thought did he presently become that, vision after vision of wealth passing before his eyes, he failed to hear a light footstep outside. Before he was aware of it Hettie Beek, creeping up behind his chair, was looking down over his shoulder.

'John! what keeps you here so late?'

Jarvis covered the paper with his hand, as though he were conscious of having done a guilty thing. And yet he had, a moment before, craved to express this written thought to this girl. Perhaps her look—or the dread lest she should misinterpret the scribbled words—gave him the courage he had lacked until now.

He rose from the desk and said, 'Hettie'—he had not called her by her Christian name for many a day—'I am going to take your father's place.'

For a moment Hettie had a perplexed look. But her expression suddenly showed that she had grasped the situation. She spoke in a tone that sounded almost resentful.

'This is Mr Burtenshaw's doing?'

'Yes. The business will be worked with his money.'

'Don't trust him, John,' said Hettie, placing her hand on his arm—'don't trust him! He means us no good. Haven't you learnt that yet?'

'Long ago. But capital must be found,' said Jarvis, 'and no one else will help us.'

'Then why should he? Be frank with me, John,' said Hettie. 'Why should this hard lawyer turn soft-headed?'

'No reason whatever! He's a rich man,' said John, 'and he believes in me—has always believed in me—as a reliable man of business. He looks upon Beek & Son as a good investment. That is all.'

Still Hettie showed no sign of being satisfied. 'It's not that,' said she; 'I can't believe it. Mr Burtenshaw is a crafty schemer. Don't have anything to do with him. If you do, John, you will live to repent.'

For a moment Jarvis made no reply. Then he spoke. 'Hettie,' said he, 'don't think that I wish to oppose you. I've no such desire. The only desire I have—you must have guessed it long ago—is to serve you. It may be that I am placing myself in Mr Burtenshaw's power. But I shall save the house.'

Hettie sank down into her father's chair. 'No, John—no,' said she; 'you have made sacrifice enough already for us. Avoid the man; don't enter into any league with him. Let him do his worst.'

Jarvis looked troubled. 'Can you really wish that? If you were not as conversant with the affairs of the house as I am, Hettie, I could more easily credit your words. Let him do his worst? You know what that means. The business would be sold. You and your sister would be cast out, and the power to help you would be taken from me!'

The girl bent her head upon her hands.

'It is for you, Hettie—for you,' said Jarvis, bending down over her as she still sat at the dead ship-breaker's desk, 'that I'm making terms with this man. You and Ruth will be enabled to go on living in comfort, as you have always been

accustomed to live, instead of being forced to face the world. It may even be that I shall gain a fortune for you in time. I will work from morning to night with that one end in view. Don't deny me the one happiness left me in life.'

Hettie looked up and held out her hands. 'How good you are,' she said, 'to Ruth and me! I wish my father were alive to hear. But he knew your worth. He was never deceived in his estimate of you.'

Then she rose and moved away.

'You will not oppose me?' said Jarvis, holding open the door.

'No. I have uttered my protest,' said she; 'do as you will.'

Jarvis paced Mr Beek's room with a restless step for a time. Then he took down the lantern from its place in the outer office, lighted it, and went on his usual nightly round of yard and warehouse. Then he went up the straight, narrow staircase which led to his own room on the upper floor of the warehouse.

He placed the lantern on the table, put a match to the stove, and sat down before it. The step he had taken to-day—the result of his talk with Mr Burtenshaw—troubled him. He had taken a leap in semi-darkness. Would it bring him perceptibly nearer to Hettie Beek? Time would show. If the lawyer had asked him to barter his soul he would have done so if by the bargain a chance were given him of winning this girl.

Hettie crossed over into the house. She entered a cosy parlour. From the windows that looked out up the fenlands the distant wolds could be seen. The flush of a crimson sunset was fading out of the sky, with the wolds forming a dark line along the horizon just beneath. The girl glanced round the room. Her sister was seated at a cottage-piano near one of the windows. She stopped playing and looked round. Hettie took a seat beside her, and told her all that had passed between her and Jarvis in the office a moment ago.

'Now, Ruth,' she asked in conclusion, 'what's your verdict?'

Ruth's features, small and exquisitely shaped, were like Hettie's; but Hettie's face was rosy and animated, while the other's was wanting in life and colour. But as Ruth exclaimed indignantly, 'Surely you'll not consent to this?' her face grew more crimson than the sunset glow.

'Beggars can't be choosers, dear,' said Hettie. 'I have consented. Jarvis is sanguine of success. He is bent on making our fortunes.'

'Have you lost all pride, Hettie?' said Ruth. 'We owe all our troubles to lawyer Burtenshaw. He caught Gabriel in his toils—father too. He will catch John now.'

'Possibly. But John is shrewd enough,' said Hettie. 'He can defend himself. The recollection that you and I are dependent on his efforts, Ruth, will be sure to rouse in him all his best energies. Ah, my dear, what a true friend he is!'

Ruth looked searchingly into her sister's face. The firelight touched Hettie's profile and brought it into strong relief. The flushed cheek, the exquisite curve of chin, the dark quivering lashes—all helped to express admiration and enthusiasm. The tone, too, in which she spoke was emotional. Did she love this man? That seemed the question that was trembling on Ruth's pale lips; and then her delicate face grew white, and she leant back in her chair shrinkingly, as the shadow shrinks when an elastic flame looks up out of the fire.

'I cannot bear this!' cried Ruth, rising suddenly and moving across the room. An agonising sob escaped her as she sank down beside the hearth. Hettie knelt at the chair-side, and with sudden impulse put her arms about her sister. 'Ruth, my dear, what is it?'

For a while there was no answer. 'I can't stay here. I can bear it no longer.' This was Ruth's low cry.

Hettie looked at her perplexedly. 'Shall I never understand you?' said she. 'I thought it was your wish to stay. Would you prefer to face poverty? Dear Ruth, you are far too delicate. The hardship and privation to which we should be exposed would kill you.'

'I shouldn't mind that,' said Ruth, with a resolute face. 'He doesn't love me! Why should I care to live?'

Still Hettie looked perplexed. But Ruth, not seeing her face, and misinterpreting her silence, hastened to unburden her mind of the load she could no longer bear.

'I would have kept my secret—kept it even from you,' said she in a broken voice, 'if I could have done so. It has been mine for months—for years past. When he worked in the yard, before he rose to be a clerk in father's office, the mere sight of him was a happiness to me. How hard he has always worked! Is it part of my weakness—he is so strong and brave—to love him so? Every one praised him—every one, except Gabriel. He was jealous of him—hated him; I firmly believe.

The men's characters are so different! The one a visionary, indolent and irresolute; the other practical, full of energy and force. Are not such men born to disagree? I have watched them together many a time. The unjust hatred of Gabriel roused my indignation; and how it increased my love! But what could a feeble, wretched woman do? If I had been blessed with health and strength like yours, Hettie, I would have left home months ago. Is there no way of escape from this misery now?'

She spoke appealingly, not meeting Hettie's look, but with her eyes fixed upon the fire. The flames leapt high, and set a glow upon her face that seemed like mockery at such a moment.

'But I've not yet told you all,' said Ruth, lowering her voice. 'He loves another. He has loved her for ever so long! I can recall—so at least it seems to me—the very day on which his love began—almost the hour. Since then he has toiled day and night with one persistent thought—the thought of making her his wife! Dear Hettie!—it is you!'

At this moment Ruth heard John's step in the timber-yard, and knew that he was coming in. It had been his privilege, ever since he had held the position of manager, to sup in this cosy parlour with the Beek family; and this hour in the twenty-four had frequently brought to Ruth a painful glimpse of happiness. From the instant of waking each morning she had wished that evening would come. It is true that most of John's attention was bestowed upon Hettie; still, one word or look from Jarvis made up for all the neglect. His indifference caused her to think the more, and with every thought of him her love had grown stronger. But to-night, since she had entrusted the secret to Hettie, she shrank from the prospect of meeting Jarvis face to face. She dreaded lest her flushed cheeks or her faltering voice, or even a glance from her discreet sister, should betray her to him. She rose hastily, and, pleading a headache, went to her own room.

A REVOLUTION IN IRON-MINING.

ALL ABOUT EDISON'S LATEST.

By FREDERICK A. TALBOT.



PROBABLY the great majority of people have read how, in a hypothetical war between this country and the United States, the utter annihilation of the British Isles is brought about by Thomas Alva Edison, the greatest scientist the world has ever seen, simply pressing a prosaic button in his laboratory. Where these stately islands rose majestically out of the Atlantic one minute, they were nowhere to be seen the next. Although this is a satirical exag-

geration of the Wizard's inventive potentialities, yet it would be interesting to know when his crowning achievement will be attained. It was popularly opined that his *ultima Thule* was attained with the phonograph, fenoscope, and kinetoscope. But Edison is not one of those who, when they have made some extraordinary invention, are content to repose upon their laurels and reap the pecuniary benefit accruing from the result of their handiwork. Each successive achievement only piques him to further attempts

by which he may benefit mankind. His latest invention, however, is of such magnitude and so stupendous in its conception that it completely relegates all his previous efforts, wonderful though they are, into insignificance. It has been said on more than one occasion that if the necessity arose he would remove mountains. This contingency has arrived, and Edison is removing the mountains. Every schoolboy knows that if you take a piece of iron ore, pulverise it with a hammer, and then bring a magnet into contact with the granulated mass, the iron molecules, fulfilling the laws of affinity, fly to the load-stone, leaving the pure sand undisturbed behind. Edison's latest consists of an application of this scheme upon a cyclopean scale. The result is that the United States, which now only mines about 15,000,000 tons of iron ore per annum, probably will become in the near future the marketplace of the world for iron.

This marvellous ore-extracting process which promises to revolutionise the iron industry of the whole world, like many of his earlier inventions, arose from almost a mere accident. His phonograph was suggested by a pin-prick of the finger, and now his latest invention was created from quite as commonplace and insignificant a genesis. About sixteen years ago Edison was rusticated upon Long Island, United States. During one of his daily peregrinations upon the beach his observant eye was arrested by a bank of sand which the sea had cast up. It was not the white, silvery, shimmering sand so generally seen upon our seashores, but was of a deep sable hue. It was this peculiar colour that aroused his curiosity, and he made impromptu investigations upon the spot, formulating several hypotheses to account for this phenomenon, but did not arrive at a satisfactory conclusive explanation. With his characteristic zeal and determination not to be beaten, he carried a quantity of the sand to his laboratory, where he proposed to carefully diagnose the case and obtain a veracious deduction. Suddenly an idea struck him. He laid one of his powerful electro-magnets near the puzzling heap. Instantly the substance was highly affected, and in a very few minutes there were two heaps—one, the original, considerably reduced in bulk, and another surrounding the magnet. A grim smile of complete satisfaction spread over the intelligent features of Edison. Why was it that they betrayed such an affinity for the magnetised steel? There was only one solution to the enigma. The little grains must be particles of iron. Then another idea, as weird as it was stupendous, now portrayed itself forcibly before the great electrician. Why not put the simple, obvious scheme to practical utility in such a manner as to make it worth while, from a commercial standpoint, to grind up masses of magnetite, and separate the iron particles from the sand by magnets? Edison is not a man to re-

cline upon a luxurious couch and hazard impossible theories at so much per dozen. When he advances a theory he immediately proceeds to put it into practice, even though it may entail several years of incessant labour; a thousand and one obstacles have to be surmounted, hundreds of experiments made, ninety-nine of which result in dismal failures involving ruinous expenditure of money. His fertile brain began to work to place his wild idea—it must certainly have appeared wild to a less audacious intelligence—into operation. It was perfectly feasible, though to make it profitable the crushing-machines and magnets would have to be of titanic proportions. But then such slight obstacles as these do not deter Edison, who is thoroughly at home with engines of herculean proportions and almost human ingenuity. For months he was busily engaged in mathematical deductions, intricate machine drawing, and what not. The outcome of it, after much grim perseverance, was that small machines were set up on the beach of Long Island, where he had discovered the mysterious black sand, and the new process of iron-smelting was begun. Alas! the enterprise was doomed to be checked while in its infancy. One night a severe gale raged, and all the black sand was withdrawn again by the sea.

Although the process had only been submitted to a very short and incomplete trial, it was sufficient to illustrate the complete practicability of his scheme. Flushed with his success, he floated a company, and the new process of ore extraction was commenced in grim earnest. Before venturing upon surveying journeys for the exploration of ore-yielding soil, with his characteristic ingenuity he devised a marvellous little instrument for divining the presence of low-grade ore in the earth. This delicate little mechanism consists of a strongly magnetised needle, similar to a mariner's compass, which deflects towards the earth when passing over beds of ore, thus betraying the presence of mineral which under ordinary circumstances would not be divulged. The indispensable utility of this ingenious little contrivance is obvious. Under former conditions iron could only be found by digging for it—a will-o'-the-wisp undertaking—but now a man can walk comfortably along with this needle in his hand, which is so delicately poised as to indicate even the slightest trace of iron. Edison was driving across the extensive wastes and gneiss rock of the mountains of New Jersey, when suddenly the magnetised needle replying upon his knee became deeply depressed to the earth, and remained so for such a long time that Edison feared his divining-rod had become disorganised; but presently the needle returned to its normal position. Great was Edison's amazement upon this unexpected discovery. The earth must be richly impregnated with iron to affect the needle so violently. They investigated a wide area, and

still the needle was highly influenced, varying but little. Edison's wildest anticipations were more than realised by this remarkable *dénouement*. The upshot of these careful explorations was that a large expanse of land, some 16,000 acres in extent, was purchased by the company. Through this vast tract, at an average depth of 700 to 750 feet, extend for twenty miles six large veins of ore-bearing rock, besides several minor ones. Edison computes that in this area there are some 1,100,000,000 tons of iron ore, which is sufficient to last the States, at the present rate of consumption, for about eighty years. In 3000 acres immediately surrounding the works extends an enormous artery containing over 200,000,000 tons, which alone is ample to supply the whole world for about three years, and which will take the present plant over a hundred years to exhaust at its present average output.

Now that Edison had discovered a rich ore-bearing ground, huge buildings for the accommodation of the Brobdingnagian machinery sprang up like mushrooms. What was but a few years ago a barren, secluded spot in the wilderness now resounds with the clang, whirl, and grinding of machinery, hissing of steam, and the voice of man! The district in northern New Jersey where this unique industry is in full swing is called Edison, after the founder. It is a strange, straggling place of a motley collection of buildings, some towering and slender, others short and extended. Thick electric cables for the transmission of the currents from the huge dynamos to the various machinery sheds are ubiquitous. The air is reeking with dust from the huge amount of sand that pours out incessantly, day and night, in a steady stream from a towering shaft, and the men are provided with curious respirators to purify the air breathed. Narrow-gauge railways dot the landscape on all sides; and the diminutive engines with long lines of trucks dart in and out of the huge buildings as if playing at hide-and-seek. Whirling conveyors of all descriptions, from an endless chain of baskets to an endless rubber belt, abound everywhere; and if it were not for such marvellous labour-saving devices as these this huge factory would give employment to thousands of hands, instead of a little over two hundred, which constitute its present staff.

Edison is the sworn enemy of the trades unions. He is never so delighted as when he can jump up and say, while looking at some new contrivance, 'Another man dispensed with.' One of the most marvellous labour-saving contrivances ever called into requisition is the steam-shovel. This leviathan machine is as nearly human as anything possibly can be. It weighs some 200,000 lb., and in design resembles a crane, with its stupendous telescopic latticed neck, from which depends the immense steel head with its formidable steel teeth. The power controlling this ingenious machine is contained in a compact space

upon the body of the car, which rests upon a migratory truck. The rock is first rent asunder by dynamite blasting. The sinews of the mighty shovel are then set to work, the iron neck descends majestically, and, amid much hissing of steam, scrunching, and gnashing, the terrible steel teeth bury themselves in the disintegrated rock, which grates and grinds as the jaws close together; the neck is again raised, and the shovel withdraws slowly from the face of the mountain with some 12,000 lb. of iron ore in its great maw. It swings majestically round and disgorges its capacious mouthful into the skips reposing upon the flat trucks waiting upon the narrow-gauge railway near by. This shovel excavates about ten tons of rock every minute, and, working day and night incessantly, clears away from the mountain-side over 14,000 tons of low-grade ore every twenty-four hours. It is a wonderful sight to see this monster at work, and Edison will sit for hours watching it with satisfactory smiles as it tears and swallows the tons of rocks with the utmost ease. Occasionally, however, it becomes too gormandising and meets with an obstreperous mass of rock. Then the exertion and strain is terrific, but at last something gives way—almost invariably the rock; but on one occasion it was the engine, which, sooner than release its grip, toppled over.

As this shovel withdraws some ten tons of ore per minute, and there are two such shovels, though the second is a trifle smaller, as may be naturally divined, the railway trains conveying the ore from the excavating grounds to the crushing plant are kept pretty busily employed. When a train has obtained its consignment of rock it steams away into a huge building, in which, upon a platform several feet above the ground, are two or three tremendously powerful electric cranes. As the train passes underneath, the skips are rapidly picked up, whirled round, and the contents discharged through a yawning abyss in the floor, accompanied by a roar and rattle and an impenetrable pall of dust, into the crushing-machines below.

The crushing-machines, following Edison's customary system, are most stupendous in construction. They consist of two Gargantuan rollers, over six feet in diameter and four feet in width, and weighing over 235,000 lb. The surfaces are studded with huge bosses, and the rollers revolve within eighteen inches of each other. When viewed at a standstill they appear too ponderous for rapid movement, yet when running they attain a velocity of over 290 revolutions per minute—equal to almost a surface of a mile. When the huge boulders come crashing through the roof above into the machine they are caught by the inexorable teeth and immediately reduced to convenient lumps about the size of coco-nuts. The noise created by these terrible engines at work is frightful, and the giant rollers grind up the

rock as fast as the skips can discharge their cargo. The average output is some 300 tons per hour. After the boulders have passed through this machine they pass through another series of crushers, the rollers of each successive machine being placed nearer together and studded with finer teeth. After emerging from the last machine, what was a few minutes previously an unwieldy mass of ore several tons in weight is now reduced to the consistency of fine powder.

Gigantic though these crushing-engines are, the mechanism that controls them is of a most delicate and intricate nature. There are in all over 4000 bearings, yet they can never be choked, as they are so constructed that grit and dust are a *sine quâ non* for their movements; while, to guard against the possibility of accentuated currents, which would probably tend to disarrange the machines, safety-fuses are plentifully provided, which sever the current directly it becomes of more than the required intensity. Again, the machine is only capable of withstanding a certain strain, and when this is attained, which is very seldom, the 'breaking-pins' snap, and the whole of the colossal machinery is brought to a standstill. The 'breaking-pins,' which are one of the salient characteristics for the prevention of accident, are graded to the one-thousandth part of an inch, and fitted to every piece of mechanism which has to withstand a strain, however moderate.

Another curious fact is that the power which drives these enormous rollers does not accomplish the pulverisation. The engine is only of sufficient power to impart a high revolving celerity to the rollers. It is this tremendous momentum, coupled with the extreme weight of the rollers—nearly seventy tons—that executes the crushing. For instance, suppose a large piece of rock about six tons in weight falls into the machine in such a manner as to offer a momentary resistance to the rollers, a simple contrivance by which the rollers are connected with the engines disengages the latter, so that no impetus is supplied during the moment the piece of rock impedes the progress of the rollers. But seventy tons of metal, whose peripheries have almost a mile a minute, require tremendous force to resist their progress. This brittle rock cannot do, and the next instant it is smashed to fragments, and the engine immediately resumes contact with the rollers. At the outset Edison had a great deal of trouble with these rollers. The 'breaking-pins' attached to a certain part of the machinery kept snapping, without any apparent reason, as rapidly as they were renovated. Edison sat and watched the feeding very closely, but could assign no reason for their refractoriness. After a week's patient and monotonous vigil he entered his office one night, and exclaimed to his indefatigable associate, Mr Mallory, 'I'm not going out of this office until I find out where the "bug" is.' He

forthwith sat down at his desk, and was deeply immersed for several hours in abstruse calculations. Suddenly he jumped to his feet and cried exultantly, 'I've got it.' He had; the defect was remedied, and the machine has run smoothly without a hitch ever since.

After the rock has passed through this crushing plant it is ready for the extraction of the ore. First passing through the drying-machine, it is carried by conveyors to the ore-separator, or, as it is vernacularly called, the 'refining-mill,' and this phase of the process is the most interesting, because here a most wonderful metamorphosis is effected. The refining building is a lofty structure six stories in height, and the pulverised ore is conveyed to the uppermost floor. From this top story the sand is permitted to gravitate in a thin shower from room to room, separating as it goes. Altogether, it has to pass four hundred and eighty magnets, arranged in three sets, each of varying intensity. The first set is the weakest—that is to say, it has the least energy and attraction; the second is medium, and the third has the strongest deflecting power. The powdered iron, of the consistency of flour, is now ready for smelting, but first it has to be solidified, otherwise while in the furnace the blasting would blow an immense amount away. The convenient conveyor again catches it as it falls from the chute in the refining-mill, and whirls it to the mixing-house. Here the pulverised iron is thrown into revolving cylinders along with a special adhesive substance which binds every particle of iron securely together.

Edison had considerable trouble in the search for a proper medium for this mixing process, and had made over seven hundred experiments before he alighted upon the ideal. As the iron, now closely resembling dough, exudes from the end of these cylinders, it is caught by an endless rubber belt five hundred feet long, with a conveying capacity of one hundred tons per hour to the 'briquetting building.' The main object of these briquetting machines is to force the doughy mixture through a small orifice about two inches in diameter, at the same time subjecting it to a pressure of a thousand pounds to the inch. The iron issues from this machine in small round knobs, called briquettes, about three inches long and two inches in diameter. They are now baked so that they should be of sufficient toughness to stand shipment. From the briquetting ovens iron rope conveyors hustle them along and discharge them into the railway trucks by which they are carried to the vessel's side. An immense amount of the iron is exported to this country; and this is where England benefits by Edison's enterprise, for no other nation can manufacture iron so well as we can do. As our supply of iron, also, is not sufficient to meet our demand, this American iron is most welcome. It is a noteworthy fact in this remarkable industry that not once in the whole process, from its crude state upon the mountain-side until

it is transported, is the material touched by human hands. All is done by machinery.

When the sand has gravitated from the top story of the refining-mill to the basement, completely destitute of even the minutest particle of iron, it is transported by a conveyor through a towering latticed derrick, from the extremity of which it spouts in a copious constant stream, making a veritable mountain in itself. From a distance this sand-fall presents a picturesque sight with the sun glancing upon its shimmering particles. This sand, although refuse so far as the iron-mining is concerned, is yet a valuable commercial product, being extensively purchased for building purposes, for which it is more

suitable than the seashore sand, as it is what is technically called 'sharper.' When it is recollected that of every ton of excavated ore about three-fourths are pure sand, it will be readily seen that Edison is literally moving mountains.

Edison had the greatest confidence in his invention; and although it has taken many years of patient and determined labour, endless experiments, ninety-nine per cent. of which resulted in disheartening failures—Edison has himself confessed that he only expects one practical result out of every hundred experiments undertaken—and the expenditure of thousands of pounds of money, it is now one of the greatest engineering triumphs the world has ever seen.

A BRIDEGROOM ENTRAPPED.

By AGNES GIBERNE.

CHAPTER I.

YOU think you really must go, John dear?' she said, and she spoke with an air of reluctance. We were within twenty-four hours of becoming man and wife, and it seemed to have come upon her as a surprise that I could think of anything in the world except our impending marriage. I certainly felt, for my part, all that a bridegroom can reasonably be expected to feel on the brink of wedding the girl of his choice; but perhaps a man is seldom so utterly wrapped up in the one object as is a woman under like circumstances. It so happened that, at this particular epoch of my existence, a second question of importance claimed attention. To be brief: I had a book in hand—the first I had written; and that book—no mere novel, but a weighty volume of early English history—was nearing completion. Those who have written books will know what this means, especially in the case of one's 'maiden' effort. The year which should see me a wedded husband might also see me a successful author.

I had, however, come lately to almost a standstill for lack of information on a certain subject, which information I believed to be obtainable from one man alone. This man was a distant cousin of Laura's, the Very Rev. Dean of a certain city situated about two hundred miles away. The Dean and I had never met, but I looked forward to making his acquaintance after our honeymoon. My book, so far as completed, had been read and approved of by a publisher; and arrangements had been made for its publication in the autumn, provided that I could get it done in time. Therefore our 'moon' was to be scarcely more than a half-moon; and so soon as we returned to England I meant to seek out the good and learned Dean, pleading, as I should then be able, our new connection, and craving his help.

But on the very eve of our wedding-day news reached me that the Dean was on the point of starting for a lengthy tour on the Continent. Another twenty-four hours and he would be out of reach for months, perhaps for a year. The questions that I had to ask could not well be written; at all events, I could not hope that the Dean would fully answer them by post. He would be away from books of reference; his letters were always short to excess; and he was famous for an absolutely illegible hand. I wanted his general opinion upon a somewhat complicated question connected with a considerable period, and involving the characters of two or three eminent personages. Half-an-hour's talk would be worth more to me than half-a-year's correspondence.

Nothing remained but to start off there and then for a chat with him before he should leave home, sending a telegram to announce my purpose, and pleading future instead of present relationship. He was said to be a charming man, full of learning, genial as sunshine, delighted to give out from his stores of knowledge. I had but to place myself in his presence, and wisdom would pour from his lips, like water from a Swiss fountain fed by ever-melting snows.

True, I should have to leave Laura on this last day, and I should have to travel hard.

Weddings in those years were over by midday. If I found the Dean in, if he were free at once to attend to me, and if a short talk sufficed, I might catch the half-past ten return train, and get back about midnight. Otherwise I should have to wait till early morning, to travel by a slow 'parliamentary,' and probably to be restricted in time for changing my clothes. Still, the thing could be done; and I made Laura understand that I fully intended to be off by the earlier train.

Despite these assurances she seemed unhappy,

and she persisted in looking upon the small separation as a serious affair. Actually there were tears in her eyes. I rather wished that she could resolve to shorten our leave-taking. The dear girl had always so much to say, while I felt that there were few minutes to spare, and I was also anxious to escape with a mind free for historical analysis.

'So you think you really must go, John dear?' she began over again, just when I believed that I had fully convinced her of the necessity. 'It seems such an enormous distance! I know you will never manage to catch the 10.30. You'll be so wrapped up in some horrid old Saxon chronicle that you will forget all about the wedding until it is too late. And then I shall see nothing more of you till we meet in church. That slow train is always late, so you will rush up at the very last moment, when everybody is in an agony, and we shall be married in a scrimmage to get done before it strikes twelve, and you will be fearfully untidy, and so sleepy with your bad night that people will say you are miserable at being married to me. Just think! And if your train breaks down, or if you have an explosion or a collision, you may never come back at all.'

'But, my love, we are not going to have either an explosion or a collision, and nobody could possibly call me miserable, because I am just the reverse,' I said, with a furtive glance at my watch.

'You can't tell. Accidents are always unexpected, and they always come at the most inconvenient times. If you don't manage to get your tie straight, that will be quite enough to make you look wretched. You don't think'—coaxingly—'that you might put off till the Dean comes back? It would not be really long, you know. Does it matter so very much? We shall not be depending on your pen for bread and butter, after all; and if your book did not come out this year, it might come out next year instead. Then you would not need to work all day long either. I'm beginning to be just a wee bit jealous of your pen, do you know?'

'My dear, I don't think you quite understand,' I said, with studied mildness. 'I am just now in full swing with the work'—

'Most men in love wouldn't be able,' she murmured; and this was disquieting, but I went on as if I had not heard: 'And if I were to lay it aside for six months or more, I might never feel inclined to take it up again. Don't you see?'

'That would be a world-wide misfortune,' she said; and if she had spoken less pensively I could almost have suspected her of laughing at me. Then her eyes again became wet. 'Would it matter, John? Would anything matter—so long as you and I are together?'

'I think it would, my dearest,' I said. 'That, of course, is a pretty and graceful view of the matter; but one's duty has also to be considered. I have my work in life to do, and mere pleasure must not be

allowed to stand in its way.' To this point I held steadfastly, and within five minutes I was off.

It had not been my fate to be always in touch with Church dignitaries. Plain John Smith, of no particular family, could hardly expect to be sought after by dignitaries of any description. But John Smith, plunged deep into the story of early English history, becomes, perhaps, a more important individual. Strong in this belief, I presented myself at the Deanery with no flutterings of trepidation; and I was not in the least surprised to meet with a right cordial reception.

To be sure, the Dean had won a reputation for universal kindness. His worst enemy—if he had ever had one—needed not to have feared going to the Deanery. He would have been received with beaming smiles and with the best of cheer. I might myself have been the Dean's nearest relative and dearest friend, judging from his outstretched hand and the radiant smile which lighted up his fine features. He apologised for the absence of his wife and daughter, who had departed by a train previously fixed upon, while he, on receiving my telegram, had at some inconvenience generously put off his own going for an hour or two that he might respond to my wishes. It was the only chance, as he meant to stay abroad for a year. Absence from work had been ordered for him; and, indeed, though vigorous in speech and movement, he looked very spare and worn.

Would I come at once to the library, he asked, to lose no time? Barely an hour remained before he had to start. The luggage was gone, and everything had been arranged. He was leaving the place in charge of a couple of old servants. These facts he mentioned casually, and then he asked—How about food? Would I like?—

'Nothing at all, thanks,' I said hastily. 'That is all provided for.' By which I meant that I could get something to eat at the station by-and-by.

The Dean looked perhaps a little relieved. 'Then you have friends in the place. That is right,' he said, and I did not take the trouble to correct him. I begrudged each moment that was wasted in chit-chat.

Through a much-littered hall we passed into a long passage, which led to a second passage, and that to a third. Then we went up a little winding staircase and into a large library—oblong in shape, with three windows, all on one side and all placed so high that no one standing on the floor could see out of them. It was a lofty room, and the walls were absolutely lined with bookcases, interrupted only by the windows and by a single oil-painting over the mantelpiece. The very door was a part of the bookcases, opening inwards, as I noted in passing. I remembered nothing further about the matter.

Two cups of coffee and some biscuits stood waiting, and the Dean offered me one, hoping that it was not cold. Again I had to decline, time being far too precious to waste in coffee-drinking.

It was not quite easy to bring the Dean to a point. He was in the unsettled mental condition of one about to start on a long journey; so that something of a wrench was needed to carry him from an atmosphere of luggage and railway-tickets to the perplexities of Saxon history. Moreover, he liked to expatiate upon the merits of his library, upon its quiet and retirement. No sound of passers-by could penetrate those thick walls, and its position cut it off entirely from all household stir. 'When I am here I seem to be in a world alone,' he said, smiling. I listened impatiently, not guessing how soon those facts would possess a keen interest for me. With an effort I turned him to the subject of my book; and he leant back in an easy-chair, his pale hands lightly joined. 'Yes, yes; you wished to ask me something,' he said.

I dashed into my explanation. In the train I had coined it over, thrusting away superfluous words; and I flatter myself that the difficulty was well stated. At first the Dean's eyes wandered, but in three minutes I had his attention. Once or twice he gently nodded his head. 'Good! Well put!' he murmured. Then, when I paused, he sat lost in thought.

'Yes, I could say a good deal to help you if there were time,' he murmured. 'But'—he took out his watch, looked at the hands, and laid it, face upwards, upon the table. 'A few hints are the most that I can manage. If, however, you would care to remain here for an hour or two after I go, pray do so. I can direct your attention to a few books, into which you might dip. Here'—he walked across to a bookcase between two of the windows, and began pulling out one volume after another. 'Have you pencil and note-book? In a couple of hours you may do a good deal if you are a rapid reader. What time must you start?'

I hesitated. 'At ten, perhaps; but, if necessary, I can stay longer.'

'Right.' He stood for several minutes, turning to passage after passage with the secure rapidity of a man at home in his books, slipping in scraps of paper as a guide to me. Then he returned to his seat, and the flow began. He spoke with few pauses, not fast, but steadily; and the breadth of knowledge shown was amazing. He never hesitated for a name, a date, a fact. I was kept hard at work, scribbling memoranda of what he said, scarcely needing to ask a question, only jotting down page after page of thoughts for future consideration. Time flew on wings. I could have listened thus for twelve hours at a stretch.

Suddenly he broke off in the middle of a sentence. 'Time is up. I shall miss my train.'

'But you were saying'—I gasped.

'Nothing of importance. Merely as to—You will find all that you really want in one or another of those books.'

'If you could just have told me'—

'My dear friend, I *must* be off. I am under a promise. Nearly ten minutes past the time I fixed; and the carriage is outside, waiting. Half a minute more may mean the loss of my train. No, no; not a moment. But stay as long as you wish. Pray do. Make any use of my library. Good-bye! They ought to have reminded me of the time! Good-bye, good-bye!'

One grasp of the hand, and the venerable Dean was gone, literally with flying coat-tails. No schoolgirl ever rushed more frantically out of a room, or banged a door behind her with more excited ardour. I could hear his feet going down the winding stair and along the passage beyond, till lost in distance. Then came a pause; and soon I heard, faint and far, the sound of receding wheels, after which silence settled down upon the place.

I carried the lamp closer to the pile of selected books, and sat down, resolved to make the most of my opportunity. First one volume, then another, I searched into, glanced through, and copied from, with eager energy and enchained interest. Those passages to which the Dean had specially referred me proved to be hardly less weighty than his spoken suggestions. He was a wonderful man, I thought; and I smiled at the recollection of his impetuous flight.

The striking of a clock somewhere in the room aroused me. Ten! Just time to put my things together, speed to the station, and catch the 10.30. But—those volumes still untouched! What could I do? To leave them would be heart-breaking. It did not at the moment occur to me that I might, after the honeymoon, ask leave from the Dean to pay another visit to his library. I was full of my work, absorbed in the present research; and, after all, the second train would do. Why not wait and travel by that? Laura had said that she did not expect me by the earlier train. So down I sat, hastily munching a biscuit to allay cravings which insisted on making themselves felt. Hardly surprising, since I had had only one cup of coffee since early lunch.

Almost instantly I was again deep in my work; and this time nothing disturbed me—not even the striking of eleven and twelve o'clock. When at length, feeling somewhat stupefied, I lifted my head and looked round, conscious of failing light or sight, the little clock struck ONE with silvery impressiveness.

'Hollo!' I muttered. 'I had not a notion how time was going.' Was I faint for want of food? That question came naturally, for the room seemed cold, and the light was very dim. Then I saw that the lamp had burnt away all its oil, and was quietly dying out. With a hasty spring I reached the mantelpiece, found a box of matches and a red candle in a diminutive candlestick, and lighted the wick just as the lamp-flame ceased to exist.

The large room looked weird and ghostly in the pale flicker of one tiny candle, and I caught

myself shivering—partly, doubtless, from want of food, partly from the chill of a spring night, inevitable even when the days are fairly warm. I stretched myself, yawned, drank a cup of cold coffee, and disposed of three or four biscuits. After which I returned the books to their places, mentally thanked the Dean for solid help afforded, folded and tied together my papers, and turned to leave the room.

Turned! But which way? No door was visible.

A moment's sense of bewilderment, followed by a laugh. It was absurd. I believed myself to have noticed, as we came in, that the door was a part of the general bookcase, and that it faced the three windows; and I ought to have observed its position more particularly when the Dean made his hurried exit, but I had been then too much absorbed to give full attention. It seemed to my recollection that, when he rushed away with flying coat-tails, he had gone in the direction of the wall opposite the windows, but I could not be sure. I had turned so quickly to the books as not to watch his actual departure.

However, the door had now to be found. Once out of this room, I could easily leave the house. If heard I might, indeed, be mistaken for a burglar; but that had to be risked; and no doubt the Dean had mentioned to his servants that he was leaving me in the library.

Had he done so? or had he in his hurry forgotten? It seemed curious that one of them should not have come to speak to me before going to bed. If he said nothing, they would naturally conclude that I had taken my departure before himself.

With the little red candle in hand, I hastily traversed that side of the room which lay opposite to the windows, feeling for the door and searching for tokens of its existence, but feeling and searching in vain. This would not do. I began over again a far more careful examination; and still the result was failure. There was no sign whatever of any possible opening. I felt and thumped, pulled and pushed, to no purpose. A solid wall of bookcases shut me in.

A third time I went over the same ground. Perhaps some spring had to be touched, or some button had to be pressed, or some string had to

be pulled. Inch by inch I explored the wall and the adjacent floor; but no break in the shelves became apparent, no spring or string or button could be discovered.

Was it possible that I had mistaken the wall? What if, after all, the door were in the end of the room opposite the fireplace? I went over that side also, foot by foot, with exceeding pains; and still failure rewarded my efforts.

I was getting tired, worried, and anxious. These huntings took time; and the slim red candle, carried to and fro, wasted fast. Soon I should be left in darkness.

The early morning train started at five o'clock; and if I could not get out by then no chance remained of my reaching home in time for the wedding. Perspiration broke from every pore with the bare idea. I pictured the assembled crowd in church, my Laura in her white dress and veil, with a pale face of fear, vainly waiting for her bridegroom. What would she think? What *could* she think?

But this was nonsense, absurdity. The door existed, and I simply had to find it. There was plenty of time, if only I could have been sure of plenty of light. Anyhow, I *had* to discover the door and to make my escape. The thing had to be; and the very notion of serious difficulty was too ludicrous. That I, a sensible, prosaic modern Englishman, should be mewed up in a doorless prison, like any unfortunate knight of the Middle Ages, could only make one laugh. So I told myself, though it made me angry too.

The clock struck one! two! Three hours remained before my train would start.

Slowly and doggedly I went round, testing every inch of those two walls. There unquestionably the door was, if only I could alight upon it. I had not come in at the fireplace-end of the room; that at least I knew with certainty; and the window-side was an outer wall. Again I hammered and shook, I poked and pushed, I tried and tested, making noise enough, one would have thought, to awaken the seven sleepers. But no opening, no sign of a possible doorway, could I discover.

My candle flickered and went out. In breathless despair I dropped upon the nearest seat.

WOOD PAVEMENT AND WHERE IT COMES FROM.



VERY few of those hundreds and thousands who daily travel the wood pavement laid down in so many of our London thoroughfares, or who have at some period in their lives stood and watched the process of laying it, have much idea of where all this wood is obtained, nor have they any idea of the process used in cutting it into blocks of the requisite size.

Various kinds of woods from all parts of the world have been tried, and of late years the Tasmanian 'stringy bark,' a species of the Eucalypti, has proved to be the most enduring, and without the glass-like surface of some other hard woods. The stringy bark, which grows all over Tasmania, has a rougher surface than the blue gum, thereby giving in greasy weather a better foothold for man and beast. It is in the south of the island.

of Tasmania that the chief supply of timber is obtained, the forests coming down almost to the water's edge, thus making the cost and difficulty of transport very small; in fact, at some of the mills vessels of three thousand tons could partly load alongside the pier, and complete their loading by barges while lying in a perfectly secure anchorage. We will now take a ramble round a typical southern Tasmanian sawmill.

Leaving Hobart by one of the small steamers which run daily to the ports down the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, which divides the two islands of Bruny from the mainland, we arrive at our place of disembarkation, and after a drive of a few miles across the island of South Bruny we arrive at our destination. What strikes the stranger's eye at first are the mountains of sawdust which we see in every direction; in fact, the beach is being fast covered up by it. Standing back a little is a comfortable-looking residence, occupied by the manager; and scattered about are the cottages of the employés, many of which have gardens attached, where vegetables and flowers can be easily cultivated. Attached to the mill there is also a general store, where anything and everything can be obtained. The mill has a forty horse-power engine driving the breakdown and circular saws, and it is capable of cutting about thirty thousand feet of timber daily. Leaving the mill, we proceed, under the guidance of the foreman bushman, along a wooden tramway, which runs right into the forest. In the early morning, before the sparkling dew is off the foliage, the whole scene is one of great beauty; and, unlike most of the other colonies, there is plenty of music from the whistling dicks, blue wrens, and other feathered denizens of the Tasmanian bush.

The tramway runs for about three-quarters of a mile on a perfectly smooth level, and then begins to rise with a gradually increasing gradient till we near a portable engine at the end of the tram. This engine is provided with a drum and six hundred feet of wire rope. Its use we shall shortly see. It is in this spot that the logs are loaded on to the trollies and sent down to the mill, the trollies being provided with powerful brakes. The first part of the journey is accomplished by the bare weight of the load, and it

finally stops upon reaching the level, where a team of horses drag it into the mill. But the foreman is calling us to come on, and, elambering up a rough track, we find the wire rope all along it, and at its end a large iron shoe, in shape something like a snow-plough; on this now rests the end of a fine log some twenty-four feet long and seven feet in diameter. The foreman and his gang see all clear, give the word, round goes the drum, and, willy-nilly, the log is hauled out to the siding, where it is soon secured on the trollies and despatched to be made into wooden pavement. The foreman bushman's duty is to select and cut down the timber, and when one patch is worked out, to go on till the engine is too far away to be of use. Then comes a short lengthening of the tramway, or the transfer of the engine to the other side; if the former is decided on, the engine is unlashd from the stump to which it has been secured, put upon the rails, and drives itself farther uphill, it being capable of going up a gradient of one in four.

On returning to the mill from the forest we see our log passing through the first series of saws, or the 'breaking down,' as they are called, and then finally the slabs reach the circular-saw bench, where they are cut into planks nine and a half inches wide and four and a quarter in thickness, thus allowing for the shrinkage to nine by four, which is the requisite size for blocks.

The reason that they are not cut into the small blocks at the same time is that the extra amount of handling and storing would greatly increase the cost of production. From a log of the size of which we have been speaking, nearly four thousand blocks could be obtained. As the planks are cut they are shot down to the timber-men, who load up the trucks, carefully examining each plank for flaws, and they are then run out to the jetty for stacking, or shipment if the craft is waiting. In most cases, however, it is sent up to Hobart by the ketch belonging to the mill, where it is again stacked and inspected, and at last finally shipped to Europe. As regards the lasting powers of the stringy bark, that, of course, has to be proved, but judging by the durability of the railway-sleepers on the government lines, a renewal once in seven years ought to be sufficient.

SALVAGE: AN EPISODE.

By BENNET COPPLESTONE.



HE waves were tearing the shingle at my feet, and in front a mile of breakers roared on the terrible White Ledge. Out at sea the flash of a signal-gun cut the darkness, and the tatters of a report trailed down the wind.

'She's on the Ledge,' said the sailor Jim, without excitement.

But Cap'n Tom of the tug *Ossickers*, of which the baptismal name had been *Aux Secours*, pulled out his watch and waited. The gun flashed again, and we listened for the tardy report.

'Eight seconds, good,' timed the Cap'n. 'She's half a mile clear of the Ledge, and drifting into the bay.'

'It doesn't matter,' commented Jim, 'for she's

bound to knock her nose against Straight Point.'

'That's true.' And the subject seemed to be removed from further interest.

I was a landsman and raw to these business-like calculations. To me the drifting ship meant a load of helpless human beings rushing upon destruction, and I turned fiercely on the Cap'n.

'Are you going to let the poor fellows perish without making an effort to save them?'

The Cap'n was unmoved. 'It ain't no business of ours,' he said. Jim was more explanatory.

'You see, sir, there's a lifeboat down to Beale, a new-painted thing, very pretty. They love to play with her, taking her out and upsetting to see how she works. The crew's never had a wreck, and that ship will give them the chance they've prayed after for months. We've got no call to interfere.'

'The Almighty,' put in Cap'n Tom with solemnity, 'has His eye on the Beale folk.'

A coastguard broke out of the darkness. He pointed towards the sea, and cried, 'Do you know who she is, Tom?' The manner of the man was that of one hugging valuable news.

'No,' said Cap'n Tom. 'Some furrin tramp, I suppose.'

'I thought you didn't, or you wouldn't be fooling here. She's a Dutch steamer bound for Southampton, fifteen hundred tons, in hardware and toys. The propeller shaft's broke. Now, sir!'

Cap'n Tom and Jim uttered a simultaneous gasping roar, and turning, pounded over the shingle at an incredible speed. I followed in their tracks, and, when they reached the high-road leading into Brightmouth, was able to overtake them. The men ran in silence except for the sound of their groaning lungs, striding ponderously like booted elephants.

Five minutes later we stood on the stone pier by Brightmouth jetty. The tug *Osuikers* lay under steam, grinding the fenders as the swell heaved her towards us. Jim dropped in at once, but I arrested the Cap'n for an instant.

'Why?'

'Salvage,' he muttered, jerking away from my grasp and leaping into the tug.

'May I come?' I shouted. The Cap'n had already cast off the fore mooring-rope, and now ran to the stern. 'You won't want a share?'

'No.'

'Jump, then.'

I jumped, and the screw began to throb.

The Cap'n took the wheel, and I stood beside him. Jim was forward on the lookout, and the crew of two tore coal out of the boat's bowels and cast it on the fires.

We ran due south in order to clear the White Ledge, which lay to the east and stretched seawards for a full mile. The gale blew heavily from the south-west, so that, when we were no

longer sheltered by the harbour, we received the full weight of the Channel on our tubby bows. It was midsummer, but the deep water is never warm. At every plunge twenty feet of spray shot into the air and rained cold as hail upon my wretched body. For a long ten minutes this misery continued, and then the Cap'n threw the tug's head before the wind. The change was wonderful. The waves sank down, and the gale was left behind, as we rushed down the trail of the disabled steamer. She had a start of about three miles; but the bay was wide, and the *Osuikers* was travelling at three times her speed.

'Shall we be in time to save the crew?' I asked.

'Oh, hang the crew!' grunted Cap'n Tom. 'I'm after the ship. She won't go ashore under half-an-hour, and we shall catch her in twenty minutes. The *Osuikers* has heels.'

Presently the heels of the *Osuikers* left the water at every pitch. The wind was on our starboard quarter, and we hurtled over the running seas. The Cap'n let the propeller race as it pleased. 'We ain't a blooming liner,' he observed. We passed the breakers raging on the White Ledge, heading due east for Beale.

'Master,' said the Cap'n cheerfully, 'give me a disabled ship, a valuable one, and I'm a bloodhound.' I reminded him of the eager lifeboat crew praying daily at Beale for wrecks, and he broke into a gale of laughter. 'We pray too,' he cried, 'and the prayers of a salvage skipper are powerful efficacious, especially when he owns a twelve-knot tug.'

We rushed down the trail of the German steamer, and ere long a dark waving patch appeared in the gloom ahead. 'Shake her up,' cried Cap'n Tom. We shut off steam on the lee side of the chase, drifting with her. I saw a thin line strike our bows like a whip-lash. Jim's hand was upon it, and running aft, he hauled on board the hight of a wire towing-cable. Then the *Osuikers* dashed ahead, and, passing under the nose of the quarry, strained out to sea. The rope drew taut. I fell instantly upon my back, and a wave rising over the quarter washed me into the unprotected cockpit. When I painfully arose the tug was toiling at full speed with little way. Cap'n Tom watched for the Bremener's bows to drag round. 'She's got to come away ten points, good,' he said. 'Hunt yourself?'

The wind was now almost abeam, and every sea broke on board. The awful drag astern held the tug down, and at every interrupted plunge she shuddered with effort. Cap'n Tom gravely regarded the superfluity of water, and, trusting the wheel for a moment to my hands, he battened down the hatches and drew tarpaulins over the engine-room gratings.

We drove across the waves, the German ship following like a black ghost. I stood, a forlorn

spar, amid the rushing water. 'There's more water than we want,' admitted the Cap'n, 'but it serves to keep our little kick-up covered.'

When Straight Point was at last cleared, the tug seemed to draw out of her grave perils and joyfully to stand inshore for shelter. But shelter came too late. The wind and the waves had done their work. The tarpaulins had been stripped away, the engines moved amid a wash of water, and the crew of stokers vainly dived into black pools and strove to feed our fires with streaming fuel. Cap'n Tom's face dropped with the steam-gauge. The tug's heart was failing her for want of fire. 'Oh! shake her up,' roared the desperate skipper; and there came back a hoarse, undisciplined murmur, 'Shake her up yourself; we can't.'

The tired propeller flapped feebly and then stopped.

I saw the towing-rope curl up over our stern and the tall hull of the German sweep towards our rudder. Jim's long body shot past me, the rope was cast off, and with a dying flicker of the screw we wriggled aside. As we lay with head to the wind the rolling German vessel slid away into the darkness, the yells of the helpless sailors tearing at my heart.

'She's lost,' I cried.

'Well, she's got a powerful lot of water to be lost in,' growled the Cap'n. 'Oh, hang! there goes the fool popping again.'

'Two days later, about midday, I chanced upon the Cap'n and Jim. They looked rather hilarious.

'Good luck, mister,' roared the Cap'n when yet a great way off. 'Come and wet it.'

'Ship was taken up by a tug out of West-haven, and is safe in port,' said Jim.

I wetted it.

'Your joy is most generous after our night of disappointment,' I observed kindly.

The Cap'n smote Jim a terrible blow upon the shoulder. 'Hark to that. We're noble fellows.'

'The gentleman is what they call soft,' remarked Jim reflectively. 'Say, sir, can you figure—do sums?'

I asserted that my 'sums' were models of skill and accuracy.

'Half of fifteen hundred pounds is seven hundred and fifty pounds, ain't it?'

'Undoubtedly.'

'Two shares for the Cap'n; three for the tug—which is only another name for the Cap'n, cursed old Jew; one for Jim Cornish—that's me; one for Bob Westlake; and one for Fat Jack. How many's that?'

'Eight.'

'What does each one figure out at?'

I solved the difficult problem and presented Jim with the result.

'Ninety-three pounds fifteen shillings,' he re-

peated. 'It sounds a lot, but I shall understand better if you put it in beer. How many quarts of'—

'Oh, come,' I said, laughing. 'Enough beer to swim in—to float the tug in.'

While Jim silently contemplated his unlimited good fortune as measured in beer the Cap'n entered into explanations.

'The Dutchman would have gone ashore but for the *Oosdukkers*, so we had first claim. I ain't a blooming Scotchman as wants everything, so I arranged with Cap'n Winks of the *Mary Jane*—her that finished the job—to join as partner over this salvage. I says, "Halves," and halves it was. Then we telegraphed to the owners at Bremen, and got the skipper of the steamer to telegraph too. We said, "The salvage tugs *Oosdukkers* and *Mary Jane* saved your ship *Kaiser*, and claim £1500;" the skipper said, "It is all right—they did;" and the owners said, "Done; apply for cash at Southampton." You see, sir, the Admiralty judges love salvage-tugs. They say that British commerce couldn't get along nohow without us, and we ought to be encouraged. Owners wouldn't pay us if they could help it; but they've got to, the judges are that sharp. So you see, sir, we haven't done badly over that little trip the other night. When we go out again you may come if you like. It's in what the newspapers call "the cause of humanity," and there's nothing like humanity, especially when it's properly rewarded.'

Cap'n Tom shook my hand, with tears in his eyes, and turned to hide his manly emotion in the flowing bowl.

FLAWED ROSES.

It was here on the terrace they plaited this morn
The crown for the bride;

And these be the roses rejected in scorn,

Flung idly aside—

Flawed buds, which they reckoned not fit to be worn
On her tresses of pride.

Pale blossoms that drank of the sun and the dew
Like your lovelier kin;

Here's the track of the snail as he crept over you,

Silver-shining and thin:

And lo! on this bud as it broke to the view

Where the sly worm crept in.

Here, pressed to the stone yet a-lean to the light,
You were shapen amiss:

And the spider has woven his tapestry slight

Like a veil over this.

Each meant to be perfect, yet failed by some blight,

So was balked of all bliss.

Frail flowers, plucked to perish, disdained and cast down,
I gather you now—

Hark the peal of the bells!—not to weave in a crown

For a beautiful brow;

But only to wither, shrunk, faded, and brown—

My heart tells me how!

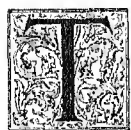
A. S. F.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

MODERN SHELLS AND PROJECTILES.



HE idea of hurling explosive or fiery missiles into the ranks of an enemy on the battlefield is one of great antiquity. So far as reliable historic data exist, the first occasion of their use in actual warfare was about

327 B.C., when Alexander the Great, while attempting to extend his conquests to India, was opposed by arrows tipped with a fiery composition. No further progress in this direction, however, seems to have been made until the eighth century, when it is recorded that rockets containing a highly combustible mixture were frequently thrown in a burning condition amongst the enemy. Prescriptions for preparing such rockets are given by Marcus Græcus, who lived about the end of the eighth century, and whose manuscripts are still preserved in the National Library at Paris. It is also recorded that rockets of this description were used by the Saracens against the Crusaders, causing great discomfiture in the ranks of the latter. Such appliances as these, crude as they undoubtedly were, furnished the germ from which the modern projectile has evolved. To trace the development of such missiles up to the present day would be a task of considerable difficulty; it is only proposed here to give a brief account of the shells and projectiles at present used by the armies and navies of the higher civilised nations.

Four chief varieties are now employed in active warfare, each being constructed to attain a special object. They may be classified as follows: (1) shrapnel, or man-killing shells; (2) shells whose object is to destroy earthworks and fortifications; (3) armour-piercing projectiles; and (4) star-shells, used to provide light when a searchlight is not available. It is proposed to give a brief description of each of these in the order given above; and it may be here stated that each variety is made to a standard size, so that all may be fired at the discretion of the officer from one and the same gun.

The shrapnel, whose object is the destruction of

human life, is one of the most deadly weapons of warfare the world has ever known. It consists of a hollow cylinder of iron having an oval-pointed end separately attached—the pointed end securing a less resistance to flight and greater steadiness. Down the centre of the shell is a small tube, open at the pointed end and communicating with a charge of powder at the base. The body of the cylinder is filled with bullets, numbering in some instances upwards of five hundred. When it is desired to fire the shrapnel, a 'time-fuse' is placed in the mouth of the inner tube immediately before loading. The time-fuse consists of a conical piece of wood bored to a certain depth, and filled with powder. A hole is bored from the exterior of the fuse to the contained charge of powder, through which the flash of the burning fuse may communicate with the powder at the base of the shell and cause it to explode. The actual firing of a shrapnel, therefore, consists of three distinct operations—namely, the ignition of the fuse, which is brought about by the burning of the cordite or powder in the gun at the moment of propulsion; the ignition of the charge at the base by the agency of the fuse; and finally, the explosion of this charge, which blows off the head of the shell and liberates the enclosed bullets, allowing them to scatter over an extremely large area. A shrapnel, in this manner, produces a result equal to that of five hundred rifle-bullets.

A simple experiment may be made to illustrate the manner in which the 'deadly hail' from a shrapnel is distributed. If a number of peas or small pebbles be confined in a paper bag, the mouth of which is insecurely closed, and the bag be projected forward mouth-foremost, it will open during flight, and the contents will be observed to escape and scatter in various directions, much in the same manner as the jets of water from a watering-can. The blowing out of the end of the shrapnel allows the contained bullets to disperse in precisely the same manner that the opening of the paper bag during flight admits the escape of the peas or pebbles.

It is obvious from the foregoing that the most advantageous place for the shell to burst would be at a short distance in front of the enemy, so as to obtain the maximum effect—a result which scientific gunnery has rendered possible at all distances within the range of the gun. By the use of the Ballistic Tables compiled by the Rev. E. Bashforth, late Professor of Mathematics at the Artillery College, Woolwich, the distance of any given projectile from the gun after the lapse of every fraction of a second may be accurately determined; and the results for each class of shell are recorded in the range-table possessed by every officer in charge. All that is necessary, therefore, is to arrange to burst the shell at a given moment after firing, which may be done by adjusting the fuse so that the flash from it shall reach the bursting charge at the desired moment. As previously described, the fuse is bored immediately before loading; and marks on the fuse indicate where it must be bored to flash at any required time. By these scientific processes it is possible to obtain results of surprising accuracy, the error not exceeding a few feet in a range of several miles. It is this precision which renders the shrapnel shell such an extremely deadly missile.

When the object is to destroy fortifications or earthworks, a shell is used which contains a large charge of powder or picric acid (sometimes called 'melinite' or 'lyddite'), and which, unlike the shrapnel, has no bullets in the interior. Further, such shells are arranged so as to explode on striking, the fuse previously described being replaced by a percussion-cap, which brings about the explosion of the charge when the shell strikes in exactly the same manner as the firing of an ordinary rifle. In outward appearance this shell resembles the shrapnel, the pointed end being hollowed out for the reception of a screw-plug containing the cap, which is inserted immediately before placing in the gun. The action in this case is comparatively simple. When the shell strikes an object, the pointed end becomes embedded to a greater or less extent owing to the tremendous velocity with which it is projected. The concussion produced by the impact of the point fires the cap, which in turn ignites the bursting charge, and the shell bursts into fragments with terrible violence. Such a shell in action is exactly equivalent to a charge of explosive placed in position for blasting purposes, and produces an equal effect; the fragments of the shell, in addition, often causing great loss of life. In the naval engagements during the recent Chino-Japanese war, cases were recorded where a single shell of this type, striking some object on the deck of a battle-ship, not only wrought great havoc amongst the appliances in the vicinity, but by the fragments produced on its bursting killed upwards of forty men. When it is known that the largest shells contain nearly two hundred

pounds of explosive material, such terribly devastating results can be readily realised.

The armour-piercing projectile differs from the two former in containing no internal charge. It is practically solid, and has a cylindrical body and pointed end. The object of this projectile is to pierce the steel armour of a vessel, and it must therefore be composed of an extremely hard and strong material to achieve this end. A special kind of steel is used in the manufacture of this class of missile, which, whilst not sufficiently hard to develop brittleness, possesses sufficient toughness to resist crumpling on impact. The point is specially hardened, so as to render it capable of penetrating the best quality of armour-plates. The destructive capacity of these projectiles is enormous, and the extent to which they will penetrate the hardest steel is truly surprising. Captain Orde Brown, R.A., has published a rule, based on actual experiments, which states that 'an armour-piercing projectile will penetrate a distance equal to its own diameter for every thousand feet of striking velocity.' Thus a shot of this kind fired from a ten-inch gun, and striking at two thousand feet per second, would penetrate twenty inches of steel; at fifteen hundred feet per second, fifteen inches; and so on. The latter velocity would easily be obtained at close range, and in the event of the projectile striking truly, the thickest armour-plate possessed by any warship afloat would be completely penetrated. The blow struck in this case would be equal to that produced by a weight of seven hundred and five tons falling a distance of ten feet. Recent improvements in hardening or 'Harveyising' the surface of armour-plates, however, have greatly diminished the efficacy of armour-piercing projectiles; and it is probable that with recently manufactured plates the actual penetration would only be one-half as much as stated in Captain Brown's rule.

The fourth class of shells used by the armed forces of this country—namely, star-shells—do not partake of the destructive character of those previously described. Their object is merely to furnish a light by means of which the movements of the enemy may be clearly discerned on a dark night, and surprises thus avoided. In their mode of action they resemble a shrapnel, and are arranged so as to burst in mid-air by the agency of a fuse and bursting charge. They contain a special composition, consisting of barium nitrate, chlorate of potash, and powdered magnesium, which is inflamed by the bursting charge and produces an intensely brilliant light—a similar composition being employed for flash-light photography. By means of these shells a very large tract of country may be illuminated, and in this manner any attempts at night attacks may be discovered. Star-shells of this kind proved extremely valuable during the recent frontier campaign in India, and contributed very

largely to the success of the various expeditions against the hostile tribes.

With such missiles as the foregoing, it is evident that warfare at the present day has far greater capabilities for destruction than at any previous period of the world's history. When we consider, likewise, that any of these

projectiles may be hurled enormous distances with great accuracy, we may well stand aghast at the possibilities of a great European war, and fervently hope that the potentialities of such deadly munitions may deter the nations from resorting to the arbitrament of an armed conflict.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER IV.—RUTH LEAVES CABLETHORPE.

RUTH'S was an inner room, beyond Hettie's; for Hettie, being the first to rise ever since Ruth could remember, had always been mindful of her delicate sister's repose. Ruth lay down upon her bed, in a dressing-gown, without firelight or lamp, well content to rest there and catch the sound of John's strong voice when their old servant, shuffling across the hall with plates and dishes, happened to leave the parlour door ajar.

Presently Ruth heard the shuffling feet of the servant on the stairs. She knew that the woman, having served the evening meal, was coming up to see what she could do for her.

'I need nothing, Mrs Mumby,' said Ruth, turning her face to the wall. 'It's only one of my headaches. I shall be well to-morrow.'

Mrs Mumby, who was a maiden sister of the trusted waiter at the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn, shaded her candle with her hand and leant down over Ruth's pillow. The light was full upon the old woman's wrinkled face. Ruth glanced up, and saw there a look of kindly concern for her. 'Why, Mrs Mumby, what is the matter?'

Mrs Mumby touched Ruth's hot forehead gently with her horny hand. 'Don't *you* go falling ill, miss.'

'I'm not going to fall ill. But'—

'What, then?'

'I am going away.'

'Going away?' and Mrs Mumby expressed her incredulity by breaking into a low, croaky laugh.

'Yes. You will take care of Hettie, won't you?'

'Why, bless you, *she* don't want no caretaking! But there,' said Mrs Mumby, patting Ruth upon the shoulder; 'get to bed and to sleep. Going away indeed! I've no patience with such talk.'

Ruth was not displeased to find that the old servant refused to take her threat seriously. In fact, she had too often expressed this same threat before. But this time Ruth was in dead earnest. She was sternly resolved upon flight at last.

She would go to London. But she had no thought—none at the moment—as to what she should do there. Her one thought was to escape

from this sense of uselessness and nonentity. She would put this miserable love for John Jarvis out of her heart. She would go where there would be nothing tangible or intangible to remind her of the past. She would go forth at daybreak, take the earliest train to town, and return to Cablethorpe no more. She walked about her room, thinking over her determination and trying to perfect her plans. She must write a few pencilled lines to Hettie, endeavour to justify her conduct, and crave her forgiveness. She crept into bed at last, and waited with wakeful eyes for the dawn. She heard Hettie moving about softly in the adjoining room after a while; then all was silent.

Ruth fell into a doze. But she soon started up, her heart beating fast, to look out of the window for a faint indication of daybreak. At this moment the old clock on the staircase began to strike.

'Five!'

Ruth had packed a small valise; and now she was quickly dressed, with a thick cloak over all, and ready to start. As she went noiselessly through Hettie's room she placed the letter on the bed beside her pillow and passed on. She chose the back way. The kitchen door was softly unbarred, the garden was soon reached, and as Ruth went out into the fields she caught a glimpse of light in the eastern sky over the dunes to seaward. Turning presently into a narrow lane, she reached the High Street. How strangely loud, how full of echoes, her footstep sounded as she hurried through this old town of Cablethorpe in the dawning light!

There was nearly an hour to spare when Ruth reached Cablethorpe Station. She sat down in the waiting-room—where a porter was making desperate efforts to kindle a fire—and tried to keep her excited thoughts under control. She was overwhelmed with consternation at the step she had taken. Something might occur at any moment to defeat her project. Every sound startled her; every passing step on the platform outside filled her with a dread that Hettie had discovered her flight. The train came lumbering into the station at last. She took her place, drew the curtain across the window, and sat in breath-

less expectation until Cablethorpe was left far behind. She was alone in the carriage. She put down the window now, and let in the wind upon her flushed cheeks. There was a delicious keenness in the air, and presently the sun came blazing up out of the east, spreading a wintry warmth and glory over the fenlands. She had started on her first long journey alone. London was unknown to Ruth. It was a place about which she had read strange things—about which she had conjured up a hundred visions. It existed in her imagination as a vast city of marvellous contrasts, a city that could not be surpassed for its wealth or indigence, its piety or crime. Until to-day—until she found herself hurrying towards this great centre—she had never fully realised, though it had often crossed her thoughts, that the day might come when it would be her destiny to be whirled into London, and alone.

It was long past midday when London was reached. Ruth deposited her valise in the left-luggage office, and then went and sat down in the refreshment-room at King's Cross Station to try and think what should be done next. Where should she find a lodging? The thought did not greatly disconcert her. Even a delicate woman with a spirit of independence cannot long dwell on the gloomy side of life. She was a fair pianist, and would be able to pay her way by teaching music. Three or four pounds, it is true, was the extent of her capital. But how many a woman had made an independent start in life with less—without as many shillings! Meanwhile Ruth was getting hungry. She ordered some dinner—for an obsequious waiter was hovering round her chair—and realised that the start in life had been made.

An hour went by. Then she hastened out of King's Cross Station, bent on looking for a room, and walked quickly through the streets. She presently found herself in the chilly, gloomy district of Pentonville. She wandered from street to street. She was growing weary. She looked in at parlour windows as she went along, where there was frequently a fire burning brightly, where lamps were being lighted, where merry faces peered out while the curtains were being drawn; and sometimes the laughter of children would reach her ear. Tears came into her eyes. She thought of John, of her sister Hettie, of the home from which she had so impulsively turned away. She understood for the first time what such glimpses of fireside life must be to the out-cast and homeless. And now she began to get afraid of herself. Dread looked out through her tearful eyes; she was alone in London; and the night had closed in at last.

Tudway had joined his ship. Mrs Clitherow had packed his box and prepared his breakfast, and had listened in a motherly way to all his talk about Hettie Beek. She had known him

ever since he was a boy; for he had always spent his holidays with his uncle in Nelson Square, where he had nearly driven the landlady crazy with his mad pranks and practical joking.

Upon a certain wintry afternoon, having carried up the captain's dinner, it chanced that Mrs Clitherow stood at her front parlour window looking out upon the round garden in the old square. She was a little, chubby-faced woman, with black hair and dark, good-natured eyes. There was frequently a wistful look in them. This expression may have been caused by a natural anxiety for lodgers. The inquiries about her drawing-room floor were very few and far between. There were lodgings to let in nearly every house in Nelson Square; and it never seemed to occur to any one to turn out of Southwark Road, when hunting for 'apartments,' and take up their abode here in peace and quietness.

The square was a quiet, peaceful place, even of an afternoon. There was only one street out of it. This led to the broad highway. There was a little one-bar gate in a back corner, by which it was supposed you could also get into the great thoroughfare; though even Mrs Clitherow, who had lived in Nelson Square nearly twenty years, had never ventured to attempt an exit in that direction. While the landlady was still standing at the window, with no light except a flickering street lamp to enliven her, a four-wheeled cab rattled into the square. The little woman's interest was instantly roused. It was such an unusual occurrence. But when the cab presently drew up at her house and the cabman jumped down to open his cab door, her curiosity knew no bounds. She was beginning to wonder whether a guinea a week for her drawing-room floor would be considered exorbitant, when who should alight and come up the steps but Ruth Beek! Before the girl had time to knock or ring the landlady appeared and welcomed her with kisses on both cheeks.

'Why, Miss Ruth,' said Mrs Clitherow, 'whatever's brought you to town—and all alone too? Dear, dear!'

Never waiting, never seeming to expect any answer, Mrs Clitherow began to help Ruth off with her cloak and bonnet, and then she knelt down to put a match to her parlour fire.

Ruth sank into a chair and sat watching the landlady with a troubled face. 'I have come to town because—because'—She gave way now, sobbing bitterly.

'There, there! Never mind, my dear, what's brought you. I'm sure I am pleased enough to see you. There! Wait till I've got you some tea,' said the landlady, becoming brisk, 'and then you shall tell me all about it.'

The fire was soon burning brightly in the little front parlour; and Ruth felt grateful for the warmth and glow—grateful for her escape out of the crowded thoroughfares. She lay back wearily in her seat and closed her eyes. Nelson Square

seemed to her a delightful haven. The roar of traffic in the Southwark Road fell upon her ear like the noise of a distant sea. She listened in drowsy abandonment to the turmoil, recalling to mind her flight at daybreak through the High Street of Cablethorpe, her journey to London, her wanderings in the neighbourhood of Pentonville. It

was while still peregrinating there, indeed, undecided where to choose a lodging, that she had determined to seek shelter at Mrs Clitherow's, at least for one night. On the morrow, when she had rested, she would even break that link which connected her indirectly with the home at Cablethorpe.

(To be continued.)

NEW TREATMENT OF LOCKJAW.

By Mrs PERCY FRANKLAND.



THE science of immunity—the study of toxins and antitoxins, or, in more homely language, poisons and their antidotes, as we may respectively designate that great field of research which has for its ambitious aim the banishment of disease from our midst—has already attracted investigators of the most diverse nationalities into its seductive provinces, amongst whom many have reaped a rich harvest of discoveries and left a golden record of results graven in its roll of fame. Just ten years have elapsed since the malignant microbe of lockjaw, or tetanus, was first successfully separated from its harmless associates by a young Japanese student investigating bacterial processes in Dr Koch's laboratory in Berlin. Kitasato's discovery was of immense importance, for it opened the avenue not only to a better understanding of the nature of this terrible disease of lockjaw, but also to the study of the most efficacious means for arresting its fatal course in those unfortunate individuals who had fallen victims to its machinations.

As more and more progress was made in the production of antitoxins, a substance probably chiefly associated by the general public at the present time with the new cure for diphtheria, as our knowledge concerning the methods of elaborating these potent destroyers has advanced, science has become possessed of a number of antitoxins of different kinds which can be handled and applied with almost as much ease and simplicity as the most common of our household drugs or family remedies. Statistics have shown of what service some of these so-called new cures have proved; and we have records of successes achieved hailing from all parts of the world—in the prevention of cholera, plague, yellow fever, diphtheria, as well as in compassing the lethal action of the venom of serpents. Lockjaw has, however, proved a very troublesome subject to master, and whilst encouraging results have been from time to time received of the efficacy of its antitoxin, there have also been many disappointing instances recorded in which its use has not been attended with any success. These antitoxins, it will be remembered, are simply the blood of animals which have been artificially rendered incapable of having, or immune to, any particular disease, such blood being

designated, according to its origin, 'anti-diphtheria,' 'anti-tetanus,' 'anti-plague' serum.

So far the application of these various antitoxins has consisted in simply injecting some under the skin of the individual it is intended to relieve; but a short time ago some investigations were published which bid fair to reveal an entirely new aspect of the whole study of the preventive treatment of disease. For these extremely important researches we are indebted to Dr Roux of the Paris Pasteur Institute, and his discovery will undoubtedly mark a new era in the history of preventive medicine. The distressing symptoms of tetanus all point to its being a disease affecting the nervous system of its victim. Now, the failure in so many instances of the antitoxin to mitigate in any way the progress of the disease shows that either it was incapable of arresting the passage of the virus to the nerves, or that the antitoxin never itself reached these centres. 'Let us try if we can attack the seat of the disease direct, and place the antitoxin where the activity of the toxin is greatest,' exclaims Dr Roux, and with characteristic scientific enthusiasm, he at once proceeds to put this bold idea into execution, and we shall see presently with what results. But in order to dispel any erroneous impression which may arise as to the nature of these experiments, which involve the introduction of material direct into the brain of an animal, he tells us expressly that when a harmless substance is used, or an antitoxin in such an operation, the animal suffers absolutely no ill results whatever, and experiences no sort of subsequent pain or inconvenience.

The results of Dr Roux's cerebral inoculations are of the most remarkable character. In the first place, he has discovered that the brain substance or nervous tissue of an animal possesses a special affinity for this tetanus poison—that the latter is attracted as if by a magnet to these centres of the body. Secondly, a very small quantity, quite harmless under ordinary circumstances, introduced direct into the brain infallibly destroys an animal with tetanus symptoms. This affinity of the nerve-cells of the body for poisons has been brought out in the case of other poisons also. For example, rats are proof against diphtheria, and will survive a dose sufficient to kill

several rabbits; but if some of the virus be introduced direct into their brains instead of under their skin these animals succumb to this poison. The same has been shown in the case of rabbits and morphia. These animals can stand a large subcutaneous dose of this substance, but an extremely minute quantity put into their brain kills them. This shows that rats as regards diphtheria poison, and rabbits in the case of morphia, are able, under ordinary circumstances, to withstand these substances. What may be the constitution and character of this extremely well-organised system of defence undoubtedly possessed by these animals is as yet a problem, and one which is daily exercising the speculative ingenuity of the highest scientific authorities. We have seen, however, that by placing the toxin in a different position, its lethal action may be immensely augmented; now we shall see what results follow the different placing of the antitoxin, and Dr Roux's next endeavour was to find out the action of the tetanus antitoxin as regards the lethal relationship which exists between the tetanus toxin and the nerve-centres.

Here we come to his most astonishing discovery. The tetanus antitoxin, or anti-tetanus serum, when put directly into the brain possesses the power of

breaking off or entirely annulling the fatal association of the tetanus toxin with the nervous system. A single drop of anti-tetanus blood added to a dose of the poison sufficient, under ordinary conditions, to destroy an animal, entirely checkmates the lethal action of the toxin, and the latter may be introduced with impunity into the brain of an animal. Still more striking are the experiments which show that a few drops of blood introduced into the brain of an animal infected with tetanus will arrest the progress of the disease and save the animal's life, although a very much larger quantity of the same blood introduced in the ordinary way under the skin fails entirely to prevent an animal from falling a victim to tetanus. What a vista is here opened up of what medical science may in the future accomplish! It is not sufficient to localise the disease; we must also localise the remedy. Who can say what the application of this great discovery may achieve in the case of epilepsy for example? Again, Dr Roux's researches have enlarged the active sphere of poisons and vastly extended their horizon, and to correctly define a substance as a poison now, more than ever, demands the subtlest skill and the highest scientific attainments.

A BRIDEGROOM ENTRAPPED.

CHAPTER II.

IF I had not succeeded in finding the door with the help of a light, I was not likely to do so in pitch darkness. Dawn is happily an early matter in the end of spring, and till dawn should begin I had to wait. Indeed, some measure of rest had become needful; for, between hard work, distress of mind, and starvation, I was pretty well done for.

The thought of a bell occurred suddenly; and why it had not occurred earlier I am unable to imagine. To ring and rouse the household would surely be an easy matter. In the darkness I felt about for a bell-handle or bell-rope or electric button—though, as the lamp burnt oil, the bell was not likely to be electric—and once more my efforts were crowned with failure. No handle or rope or button came to hand. I was still hopelessly immured.

Tired though I was, sleep proved to be out of the question. I do not think I kept my eyes closed for sixty consecutive seconds. If I tried to do so, an image would at once arise of Laura weeping in church for her absent bridegroom. A hundred times I writhed under the misery of that imagination. A hundred times I clenched my fist over the folly of which I had been guilty. What mattered Saxons, historical difficulties, manuscripts finished or unfinished, compared with her peace of mind? Why had I come

at all, under such circumstances? or why, if I did come, had I not had the common-sense to learn my way out of a room as well as into it?

But the angry asking of these questions made not the smallest alteration in my position? I remained a prisoner; and time was passing fast.

With the earliest gleam of dawn I was astir. The windows first claimed attention. I pushed beneath one of them the library steps, and climbed up, intending to look out; but the ground-glass defied my efforts. In vain I struggled to get the window open. An upper pane alone seemed to be movable, managed by a cord, like a church window. To get high enough for a peep out was not possible. Window number two I tried, with the same result. In a lower pane of window number three, however, I found one large spot of unground glass through which I could see. Alas! to no purpose. The height was far greater than I had expected. An acrobat alone could have made his way down with the aid of a rope, and I had no rope; neither was there aught of the acrobat in me. I had never been particularly good at athletics, and a glimpse of the rough-paved court below showed what a climber might expect if he fell.

Later on, no doubt, people would be in that court, and I might communicate with them, if only through smashing a pane of the Dean's glass; but at present the household appeared to

be wrapped in profound slumber—so much of the household as remained in the house. 'Two old servants,' the Dean had said, would be left in charge; but two alone could hardly keep this great place in order. They might be left in charge, but surely younger servants would remain also. At all events, they would not have departed in a body within an hour after the Dean had taken himself off. Even if only two were in the house—a most unlikely thing—those two would in time get up; and sooner or later one of them would come to the library, if but to dust and put it straight, and with no thought of the unhappy would-be bridegroom immured within. But how late they might choose to lie in bed, having no especial reason for getting up early, who could venture to say? That they would appear soon enough to release me for the five o'clock train was not to be hoped for.

Again I set to work, stamping, pushing, pulling, growing frantic under failure. Those grim book-cases seemed to frown upon me with a vicious derision, as if they understood and would not let their prisoner go. Not a shelf cracked; not a board yielded. Now and then, by way of variety, I tried shouting for help, banging the walls—or rather, the books upon the walls—and yelling 'Fire! Fire!' in hope that somebody might come to my rescue. Dead silence was the sole response. The servants plainly slept out of hearing.

Despair again crept over me. Three o'clock was long gone by; and four o'clock arrived. One hour only—half-an-hour—if I wished to reach the station in good time. I redoubled my exertions; and still the walls of books in solemn unbroken rows shut me in.

At last, without seeking for it, having repeatedly sought in vain, I stumbled upon a bell in a queer, unlikely corner, hidden behind a curtain. I pulled it vehemently, savagely, again and again, the wire each time yielding with a feeble creak, as if out of order. Nobody responded.

Five o'clock struck. Too late! I could not be in time for our wedding.

I flung myself down on a sofa and gave way to weariness. Nothing more could be done. I had to wait. My best exertions now could only enable me to send a telegram; and by-and-by might do for that. I resolved to lie patiently till somebody should appear.

But time passed, and patience again failed. No sound broke the stillness; no voice or footfall could be heard. The Dean had boasted pleasantly of his quiet study; and the silence gripped my nerves. I would have given anything for a murmur of human life. Once for ten minutes I dropped into an uneasy sleep; and immediately I was in church, waiting for my bride. When at last she appeared she was not Laura, and I woke with a start, in a cold perspiration from head to foot. 'No more sleep for me!' I said aloud, and I walked the room with restless steps.

Six o'clock struck. Seven o'clock struck. Eight o'clock struck. How much longer was this to go on? The silence had grown awful, and I was ravenously hungry.

A fit of fierce resolution seized me. I went up the library steps, poker in hand—looking no doubt like an escaped lunatic—and smashed a big pane of glass. The broken pieces fell clattering upon the stones below; but nobody called out or showed surprise. I called, shouted, yelled for help, but no voice answered. Could it be that the whole downstairs household had eloped, the two old domestics included, and that I should be left to die a slow death from starvation?

Leaving far out, I saw, to my delight, a black retriever, chained to a kennel. That meant some one coming sooner or later. The dog, at least, would not be left to die for want of food. I shouted again, and he wagged his tail, which was the thing I least wanted. If I could rouse him to bark furiously it might draw attention. I fetched bits of coal and flung them at him, and he wagged his tail anew, as if I were inciting him to a game of play. He seemed almost as forlorn as I was myself, poor fellow!

Nine o'clock struck. Ten o'clock struck.

I fell into a fresh agony of impatience. Unless I could get a telegram off in less than an hour it might not arrive in time to stop Laura from going to church in her bridal dress. A bride and no bridegroom! The thought was too ghastly. I sat down, hid my face, and groaned. Then I walked the room anew, in a fever of excitement, feeling almost as if I should go out of my mind. Those wretched Saxons!—that miserable book!—to have brought me to such a pass as this! Would Laura ever forgive me?

Once more I climbed the steps, looked out of the broken pane, and shouted at the pitch of my voice; and again I ransacked the walls in an absurd hunt for a door which all the while lay close to hand. By this time I was reckless; and the Dean's hair would have stood on end had he seen how I dragged out his cherished books by the dozen, and flung them to the ground.

For a time I think I was slightly delirious. The entrapment was so perfect, yet so ludicrous. The thought of my poor Laura drove me wild; and both hunger and thirst had me in their grasp with a clutch which grew worse hour by hour. Better to have put off the publication of my book for ten years than to have risked this misery. Other Saxon histories existed, but no other husband for my Laura. What *would* she do?

Eleven o'clock struck!

I watched the clock-hands with a dazed stare. They went at a startling pace; even the slow hour-hand seemed to trot, and the other positively raced. I could picture to myself all that was going on two hundred miles away. I could see Laura's first disappointment on learning that I had failed to arrive by the earlier train, and I

could hear her laughing yet half-pained comments on my absent-mindedness and devotion to books. I could imagine the dressing for the ceremony; the driving off; the fears expressed of a late train; the uncomfortable waiting of everybody in church; the pale and troubled face of the dear little bride on finding that I was not there; the condoling and lugubrious looks of friends. Then, as minute followed minute, I heard the cruel whispered surmises, in which some were sure to indulge, as to the true reason for my absence. Soon a messenger would walk in who had been sent to meet the train, and would say that I had not returned at all. And Laura would—no, I did not think she would faint. Girls in these days do not drop off into unconsciousness so readily as their grandmothers did; but she might suffer all the more acutely for not fainting.

Twelve o'clock struck!

It was over now. No wedding could take place. Laura's father would give her his arm, in his manner of old-fashioned courtesy, and would conduct her out of church, boiling over with wrath, though perhaps not saying very much. 'The man's a villain!' That would be his one remark. And Laura—would Laura trust me? or would she too suspect me of having played her false? I could not be sure. I could only picture how, if she did make some little effort to defend me, her brother would draw in his breath, muttering between clenched teeth, 'Don't speak of him!—the brute!'

It was all at an end now; and my Laura sat at home a forsaken bride. How should she ever dream of the real explanation?

One o'clock struck, and no one came. Two o'clock; and still I was alone. I had searched anew, shouted afresh, pulled the bell-handle again and again, all to no purpose. My brain swam, and I began to wonder—Was this a dead world into which I had wandered? I was growing faint for want of food, and my face looked ghastly, as seen in a small mirror over the mantelpiece and under the oil-painting of the old gentleman. The eyes of the latter haunted me dismally.

How the afternoon passed I cannot tell. It crept by somehow. I had fallen into a mood of dull endurance, having resolved to make little further effort until towards evening. It was evident that the domestics left in charge had taken themselves off for the day. Now and then the dog howled, as if he too felt lonely. I felt sure that I should hear his pleased bark the moment any one entered the yard.

Two, three, four, five o'clock passed in succession.

Would nobody ever appear?

I thought I would write a letter to Laura, which should explain all, in case—well, in case I never got out, but remained in durance vile till I died of slow starvation. All things considered, such a consummation seemed hardly probable—at least it hardly seems so to me now;

but I had reached a stage of unlimited pessimism. So I made my way to the Dean's study-chair, which stood close to his heavy writing-table, and placed myself where he was used to sit. Despite failing limbs and dizzied brain, I was not even then without a grim sense of humour at the absurdity of the whole affair.

As I took up one of the Dean's pens, having placed a sheet of the Dean's paper in readiness, something yielded slightly under my right foot. I hardly noticed the fact, but began to write:

'MY DEAREST LAURA,—What must you have thought of me? But it is through no fault of mine. I am shut up in the Dean's library, quite unable to find a way out. It sounds ridiculous, but'—

It did sound ridiculous, and I went off into a helpless fit of laughter, laying down the pen and holding my sides. Something again yielded under my foot. Involuntarily I pressed harder, glancing up as I did so. The board sank, and a crevice appeared in the wall just opposite the middle window, part of the bookcase bulging outward.

With a shout I sprang to my feet. My heart beat wildly, and for a moment I believed what I saw to be a delusion of the imagination. I rushed across—pulled—and the door opened easily.

'Free!' I gasped, and leaped outside, in terror lest the walls should close upon me of themselves, so low had I been brought by starvation. 'Free!' Then I reeled backwards against the baluster of the little winding staircase, at the top of which I stood.

Somebody was coming along the passage below. If I had not that moment let myself out, I should have been rescued a minute later. I could neither see nor hear clearly for the mist in my eyes and the buzzing in my brain.

'Tel—telegram—Laura!' I muttered. 'Couldn't help it. Couldn't get out, you know. I've been in there—ever since—starving'—

'You poor dear unfortunate John!' Laura's own voice exclaimed, with a burst of laughter. 'You dear, funny fellow! How *could* you do it?'

Evidently she had not heard my utterance, and I made an instant effort to pull myself together, braced by the merriment in her voice. 'I—er—yes—how kind of you to come!' I faltered, holding on to the baluster with a firm clutch, for the passage below seemed to be nearly over my head. 'I—er—very much occupied, you know—couldn't get away from the books—taking notes, you know—longer about it than—er—I expected.'

'Take care, child; he's nearly off,' a masculine tone remarked. Unfortunately, though Laura had not heard what I first said, her father *had* heard.

I am bound to confess that it was I who fainted on that occasion; not Laura. Laura is a vigorous modern young woman, addicted to bicycles, and never at a loss. The first words which reached my understanding as I emerged

from an unpleasant fog were, 'What a mercy he will have me to take care of him! These literary people *are* so helpless!'

Afterwards, of course, I heard more. The Dean, in his hurry, forgot to say anything to the servants about my being in the library, and they took it for granted that I had gone away first. That the Dean had not rung for any one to show me out was unnoticed in the general bustle; also, he had a way of often showing his friends to the front-door himself, after his genial fashion. Five or six of the domestics remained in the house; but they slept late next morning, as I had surmised, and then they went off for a jaunt of several hours' duration, leaving only one deaf old woman and a child in charge. This could hardly have been the intention of the mistress of the house, and I have reason to believe that some of them lost their places in consequence.

The old woman had passed her day in a part of the house where no sound from the library could reach her; and though the child confessed to having noticed certain queer sounds, she either thought nothing of them or was afraid to speak. Both old woman and child were in dire terror of the dog in the yard, and, though supposed to look after him, they were careful not to venture in that direction.

The Dean was a kind-hearted man. From London he took the trouble to send a telegram to Laura, whom he had known well in her childhood: 'I congratulate you; he is a capital fellow; left him in my library.'

For once the slow morning train was punctual to a minute in its arrival; and as a friend went to the station to meet me, my non-appearance could be early proclaimed. All thought of assembling in church at the hour fixed was given up, since I could not possibly be in time for the wedding; so that haunting scene of my imagination had no foundation in fact. Instead of anything half so tragical, friends appeared to have indulged in a good deal of fun at my expense, and Laura had to defend me from attacks all round touching

my unpunctuality, general impracticalness, and supposed preference for Saxon antiquities over modern weddings. While all this was going on, and the bride whom I had pictured as forlornly weeping in white was really chatting gaily in green, another telegram came in, at first regarded as from me. It proved to be a second from the Dean:

'Going on boat. Uneasy as to J. S. Forgot to show him how to open library door. Peculiar arrangement. Hope all right.'

That was enough for Laura. My continued absence and the lack of any telegraphic explanation made clear that things were not 'all right.' She started with her father by the first train, and found me, as already told, when I had just succeeded in making my escape.

Why the Dean did not telegraph to his own servants has always been a puzzle to me; and how I failed to find sooner the trick of the door has always been a puzzle to everybody else. Laura tells the story against me to this day, ending regularly with a gay—'Just like him, poor dear fellow!'

Of course there is not a man of my acquaintance—letting alone the women—who doubts that he, in a similar position, would have managed to release himself in half-an-hour. Perhaps it is rather curious that I should not have thought of the neighborhood of the writing-table, where the Dean usually sits; and that I should have lost so much time in tugging at a disused bell-rope in a corner, instead of finding the bell-handle at one side of that same table. But such is life! We are all subject to our little weaknesses, one way or another. And nothing is easier than Columbus's egg—when once the secret has been made known.

As for my history of the Saxons, which cost me so many hours of misery, the volume came out in due time, and was extremely well reviewed. How far the world has been the better for it I cannot say; neither is it needful to state precisely how many copies were sold. I have not yet made a fortune by means of that book.

A TRIP ON THE NEW CONGO RAILWAY.

By Rev. W. HOLMAN BENTLEY, of the Baptist Mission to the Congo.



THE Congo Railway is complete, so there is now direct and easy communication by rail between the ocean-going steamers arriving at the port of Matadi, on the Lower Congo River, and the fifty steamers plying on the 11,000 miles of waterway lying open from Stanley Pool, on the Great Upper River and its affluents. The river is navigable from its mouth to Matadi, a distance of 100 miles; beyond this point, for 200 miles, rapids and cataracts bar the

way, and those who wished to reach the Upper River had to tramp overland for twenty or thirty days, over hilly, stony roads, through woods and jungle-paths.

Commencing in 1886, the engineers had to face more than half their difficulties and expense in the first twenty miles. At the twenty-fourth mile a station was opened in 1893, but was little used. In 1896 the half-way point was reached, and in May the Tumba station was opened for traffic. Stores and transport agencies made their appear-

ance as if by magic. For two years that has been the point from which the natives carried the loads on their heads to Stanley Pool, instead of from the Lower River as formerly. Now all the line is complete, and the native transport no longer exists.

I took an early trip on the railway when it was only open as far as Tumba, before things were properly organised. The company were delightfully frank with their passengers in those days. 'You travel at your own risk entirely; we incur no responsibilities, and can only do our best to convey you to your destination. We do not want passengers or freight, for we have enough to carry for ourselves, in the rails, iron sleepers, bridge materials, &c., which choke our base. However, as you are to be our future freighters, we will oblige you, by conveying you and your goods; but you must put up with the inconveniences of our already congested traffic.'

My wife and our three-year-old girlie were to go home to England, and I had to see them off. The trains had been very irregular, and it was not safe to send them alone. The rains had been very severe; embankments had been washed away; there had been recently a big slip in one of the cuttings, and hundreds of men had been at work clearing the blocked line. Traffic had only been resumed three or four days; so I had to go as well. There were a hundred possibilities.

It is only one hundred and fourteen miles from Tumba to the port of Matadi; but the single ticket for my wife cost two hundred and thirty-three francs (£9, 6s. 4d.)—two francs per mile; my own, being a return ticket, was three hundred and fifty francs (£14); its number, 0001, showed that it was the first return ticket issued; it was available for four days.

The train was to start at half-past five in the morning, so we had to send the baggage overnight, and were advised to be very early, to get a seat, for there were many passengers, and only one carriage. The dawn had not broken when we passed the three factories of the trading companies to take our places. Across the line a cannibal Bangala from the Upper River stood as sentry, guarding the long transport store of the Congo government; externally the man had been made into a smart black soldier, in fez, blue tunic and knickers, and red girdle. Higher up the slope were the quarters of the State officers, built of mats or boards with grass roofs. Farther away to the left, beyond a swampy stream, one thousand native carriers were still sleeping in a long open shed, packed like sardines, their feet to their fires.

We started with excellent promptitude at half-past five, to the tu-tu of a horn, *à la mode belge*. It was a comfortable carriage, with pivoted, cane-seated chairs, glass windows, and sun-blinds—everything so far very convenient.

The *conducteur* was a native of Sierra Leone,

who had been educated in a mission school, while the engine-driver and stoker were blacks from Senegal, who had learned something of their profession on the railway there from Dakar to St Louis. They knew little of the properties of steam, save that it would burn you as it flies from the coals; and as for mechanics—well, if you twist a certain cock a whistle results; a certain lever causes the starting of the machine, or, returning it, the stoppage; and so on. A leather thong round the waist is loaded with Moslem amulets done up in leather, black and shining. Fairly intelligent men, but quite illiterate. The trains, therefore, over a great part of the distance, were in the hands of Africans only—no white men in charge. The Congo State Government, as well as the Railway Company, make no distinction as to colour in their employés. If a black man is found equal in every way to a white man, he is paid and treated accordingly. Efficiency of work is the test. Only natives of Africa are permitted to travel second-class; they are allowed to sit on the trucks on the top of the passengers' luggage and general stores, amid a constant shower of hot cinders from the engine. For this they pay twenty-three francs (19s.) from Tumba to Matadi. Many make use of it. Some sixty or eighty soldiers were on our train, *en route* for Boma, the capital.

For a while we rattled briskly on, stopping two or three times to take water for the engines where the railway crossed a good stream. Two or three coast natives would be in charge of the pumping station, and would have to keep the 10,000-litre tank full. The track wound about among the low hills, which were torn by torrents in all directions. Ten miles to the north rose the cliffs and steep escarpment of the plateau of Bangou, 800 to 1000 feet above the broad railway valley. After a while we came to the steep climb of Kimpese to cross a hill-range. We ran up a valley between two spurs, turning sharply round at the head of the valley, ever ascending, back out of the valley on one of the spurs, twisted round over the spur, up another valley, and back out again through a cutting in another spur, and round once more on the first spur, and so to the top. A wonderful piece of planning and climbing. Then a long, winding descent, and we reach an embankment and a fine iron bridge, ninety yards in one span. There we stop, for the bridge over the Kwilu River is not yet completed, and we must cross on the wooden trestles. The wooden temporary work had been several times washed away after heavy rains, for the river rose twenty feet sometimes. In another fortnight it was to be cleared away; meanwhile a light engine, which stood in a siding eighty yards behind us, was to push us across, and our heavier machine would return to Tumba with a train of rails, goods, and a truck of cattle for the railhead.

While the engine was being uncoupled I seized the opportunity to make a few notes, for such a

trip was worth describing. I inwardly wished that there would be some interesting 'incidents;' although, for the sake of my wife and child, I hoped that it would be a safe journey. I had scarcely written half-a-dozen lines when something happened. I was conscious of a crash and shock; my pivoted chair whirled round with me; the roof-lamp flew against the glass door of the carriage beside me, and shivered itself and the glass; a shower of paraffin, a violent jerk backwards, and a tangled heap of passengers in the middle of the car! Some one said that the shunting-engine had dashed into us. Scarcely had the word been uttered than we saw the same engine dashing at us again! Crash! the chairs whirl, a back jerk afterwards, and the passengers once more in a heap on the floor, some cut. A bolt for the door ensued, and some struggled through the narrow windows. The injured were examined. The wild engine came steadily up to the train this time, as if nothing had happened. The engine-driver was soundly abused by the local authority, and fined; but it was hard to ascertain what had happened, except that the moment the steam was turned on, the engine had rushed at full speed at our train, each time from seventy or eighty yards. Once more we entered our carriage, and were pushed over the fine bridge, and started on again. My ardour for 'incidents' was much cooled.

A run of thirty miles over hilly country, then we pulled up at the half-way station Songololo. 'All alight, please! The train goes no farther to-day; these two tents are at the disposition of passengers.' We had not been warned of this at Tumba, but had started hoping to reach Matadi that day. I believe that a notice was posted at Tumba later on in the day, that for the next fortnight trains would take two days over the journey. Two large single-roofed tents in the fierce sun were thus offered. As my wife and child were with me, a wooden shanty was found for us. Every one was kind, and ready to help. There were no shops where food could be obtained; only water could be supplied. We might buy bread from a bakery forty miles away, when a service train came in in the evening. Fortunately, we had a midday meal with us, and I had brought something for the return journey. Songololo is a fairly flat spot in a wilderness, thinly inhabited, and well stocked with game; elephants, buffaloes, and antelopes are to be found. About two hundred black workmen had their huts there—platelayers, ballasters, and engine-cleaners. There were also shanties for the white engineers. I asked one of the natives what we were really stopping for. 'No coal; not a pound of it on the station. Three trains are in the sidings unable to go on.' They were only able to supply half rations of coal, until a new supply came from Europe in a fortnight's time. That morning they were clean out of it, but a coal train was due in the evening.

A blanket on a board floor makes a hard bed,

so we were prepared to get up at five o'clock next morning, to be ready to start half-an-hour later. We did not get away, though, until half-past eight. All desire for further 'incidents' had vanished.

It was an interesting ride, for great engineering skill was needed to make a railway in the mountainous country toward the port. Sometimes we ran into masses of hills, through which no way seemed possible; but a sudden twist would reveal a torrent in a gorge between two lofty hills, and we wound round beside it on a terrace in the steep, wooded banks. We enjoyed a good deal of this sort of travel, through beautiful forest and mountain scenery, now following a torrent in its ravine, rapidly descending with it, until it turned aside into a larger stream; crossing this, ascending it, then a sharp corner, and the ascent of one of its feeders—another torrent—in a densely-wooded ravine, until we come to a cutting in a *col* (high water-parting), and down the other side into another system of torrents. The whole of this part of the road is a marvel of courage and skill, and very thorough work—no scamping anywhere. No one would have thought a railway possible in such a country.

At length we pulled up in a wooded gorge at a little station. There was no population to need a station there, but there was a good stream, and the station was required as a point on the single-track railway at which trains could pass. We were telephoned to wait here an hour, for the director-in-chief was coming up, and his train had the block-staff. There was time for us to bathe in the stream, the Ndizi. Quartz was everywhere about, but amid the micaceous sand and quartz pebbles no gold has been found, although such a likely place. How very convenient to stop and enjoy a bath in the middle of such a ride on a hot day! So much better than the feverish rush of railway travel at home! One day the engine-driver lost his hat on the way; but he stopped the train and ran back for it a quarter of a mile. Why not? The bath over, we strolled round. A native at the station had some bananas for sale, but had no shame in asking a franc for each single banana!—so exorbitant have become the prices along the line. Demand creates no supply out here; it only drives up the price of things. When Tumba railway station was opened a new route of transport became necessary. When the first caravans arrived in a district, even where food was plentiful, exorbitant prices were demanded and paid. The women who made the food being able to get the barter, cloth, &c. they wanted with one-tenth of the labour, one-tenth of the food previously made was supplied. Prices rose higher, and the unfortunate carriers had to pay these fearful prices or go hungry. Then, when ordinary people in the towns wanted to buy food—orphans, unmarried young men, old people—the women would not sell to them; they kept the food for the carriers; so all suffered, and because they could not pay

such prices, the manioc was allowed to rot in the ground. This has occurred again and again, and many have died in consequence. Wealth is a great curse to these people—hunger results; while poverty means an abundance of food. So this rascal would have a franc for each single banana on his bunch or not sell at all, and this in a land of bananas! I had to go without. I would not pay such a price. Fowls were five to seven francs each, and small into the bargain. Such is the overreaching avarice of the African.

The director came, and we started; but after eight miles there was another long wait. The first store was here, so refreshments were found, and tins of delicious sterilised milk (not condensed). Thence only twenty-four miles lay before us. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, so we were sure of getting to Matadi all right.

We came into the station of La Mia, at the foot of the last great climb over the Mpalabala Mountain, the greatest engineering feat of all. Over this part of the railway we had a white engine-driver; nevertheless our engine left the rails at the crows'-feet of the station points, and all its eight wheels were buried in the ballast in a most awkward place. Jacks and all needed tools are carried by each engine, for such things often happened then. It was soon evident that the engine could not be on the rails until the small hours of the morning. There was a three-roomed shanty on the side of the hill. A black clerk from Sierra Leone was in charge of the station; an Italian engineer had one room. He offered us everything he had in his pantry; begged us to take anything we liked: most kind he was. We took some macaroni to eke out our supplies, for now we had been two days *en route*. We spent our second night in the shanty.

At three o'clock in the morning they succeeded in getting the engine on the rails; but it was five o'clock before we were all on board and started again. We wound our way up the long climb of 360 feet, and descended with great care the 830 feet on the other side. This part of the line is a wonderful piece of construction. A terrace had been cut in the steep side of every ravine that scored the side of the mountain, in and out again, then round a spur into another ravine, and over a light cobweb (iron) of a bridge, eighty feet above the torrent. The lines were laid in a sharp curve on the bridge, so that the train could swing out of the ravine on the other side. The plan of the railway in these ravines is like a U, the curve of which is on the bridge. The bridge is three times the width necessary for the narrow gauge (thirty-two inches), so that there is room for the curve.

At length the Mpozo River was crossed, roaring and tumbling on its way down to the Congo; then the route lay on terraces along the precipitous slopes of the Mpozo gorge. The carriages overhang the rails, and the way is so narrow that from the

windows of the carriage, in some places, you can only see the Mpozo foaming on the rocks 100 to 150 feet below you; while the track winds round such fearfully sharp curves that the speed has to be reduced almost to a walking-pace.

In the early days there was a terrible accident in that Mpozo ravine. A truck of dynamite, with some forty workmen on it, was standing in a siding; an engine came to pick them up; the driver ran his engine too heavily on them; the dynamite exploded, and blew train, line, trucks, and everything and every one to smithereens and down the precipice. Higher up the hill, engines have more than once derailed and crashed down into the ravines. Last time that happened, the stoker was in the act of adding to the fuel in the furnace, and the jerk threw him into the firebox of the engine as it tumbled. Now the way is well ballasted and settled in this part.

As we rounded the mouth of the Mpozo a great crocodile lay, with his mouth wide agape, on the sandbank below us, unmoved by railway whistles and rattling trains; he was used to them. We reached Matadi at half-past six in the morning. On my arrival I called attention to the fact that the time for my return ticket had almost expired, and an extension was granted.

The town of Matadi ('rocks') is a rocky place, built on the steep banks of the river; the houses, factories, and stores are perched about wherever a terrace can be made. The river there is rather less than a mile wide, in a gorge a thousand feet deep. The repairing shops of the railway are there, stores and station ground, and a pier, so that the ocean steamers can discharge into the trucks.

My return journey had also its 'incidents,' for as we were climbing a steep bit with many curves, in a cutting twelve feet deep, we suddenly pulled up. The engine was off the rails! I gathered firewood, and grass for my bed, and prepared for another night out. After an hour the engine was on the rails. We started, backed a yard or two, and then forward, and off the rails again at the same place. It was five o'clock, and not until half-past seven did we get right again. Once more a start, and off the rails again, two feet farther on; so once more the jacks were placed, but it was half-past eleven before we started again. This time we did succeed in passing the bad place, and ran along fairly well, but we had a heavy train.

Passing the Lufu River, we commenced the steep ascent beyond, but half-way up came to a standstill. The engine was not strong enough. We backed a little, and tried again and again, but it was no use; so we dropped down the hill again, and were left standing on the bridge, at two o'clock in the morning, in the dark, while the engine took up the fore-part of the train. Happily nothing came up behind us, although we had passed no telephone station for the last eleven hours. There was a station a mile beyond, but they would not trust that engine down again;

they sent another, which, with a down passenger train, had been waiting for us to pass ever since eleven o'clock the previous morning. When we reached the station the down passenger train passed on, and we continued our way to Songo-lolo, where we stayed five hours. Thence our train consisted of the first-class carriage, a cattle-truck, and two trucks heavily loaded with rails, and on these a number of bags of the State mail.

After passing the Kwilu, the engine that took us on was quite unequal to its task. We would run half-way up a hill, fail, and back down to the bottom; wait a quarter of an hour to get up steam, and try again. Sometimes the attempt would not be made without a stoppage to get up the pressure. So we progressed. We did reach a siding; but the driver was in a dilemma. The cattle could not be left, for they needed water and food; the trucks must go on because of the mails, and the passenger carriage would be wanted at once; so he went on. It took us six and a half hours to do that last twenty-four miles into Tumba.

These difficulties and troubles of the first days

are now over; the service is improved, and works well. I came over the same ground last October in thirteen hours in comfort and safety, and without an 'incident.' The railway has been completed to Dolo, Stanley Pool, and round to Leopoldville, a distance in all of 250 miles. In the first days of June the first 'personally conducted' party of tourists started, under the auspices of Messrs Thomas Cook & Sons, to be present at the official opening of the railway. So the great victory over Nature has been won, and the long reaches of the Upper Congo have been connected with the world.

A fast service of steamers is to run between Antwerp and the Congo in eighteen days; the railway is to do the whole distance from Matadi to Stanley Pool in twenty hours. A fast steamer for the Upper Congo is to be sent out in pieces, to be reconstructed at Stanley Pool; she is to do the journey thence to Stanley Falls—1000 miles—in eleven days; so that it will be possible to go from Antwerp to Stanley Falls, in the very centre of Africa, in thirty-one days—a triumph of Belgian energy and perseverance.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

COMMUNICATION IN TRAINS.



R. F. HOLLINS, telegraph engineer and superintendent of the Great Eastern Railway, deserves the thanks of the community for having devised a system of electrical communication between passenger and guard which

has met with the approval of the Board of Trade, and which is given freely to the world, for it is not protected by patent. In a central position in each compartment of the railway carriage is placed a lever switch working right or left against fixed stops, with a notice above it in bold print: 'To communicate with the guard in case of urgent need, move handle against either stop. Penalty for improper use, £5.' Such movement rings bells on the engine and in the guard's van, while at the same time a red disc is projected from either side of the carriage from which the alarm has come. The lever handle remains fixed against the stop towards which it has been urged until released by the guard with a special form of key, and the bells continue to ring until such release has been effected. The circuit can also be used for exchanging signals by a prearranged code between guard and engine-driver at all times. But perhaps the most valuable feature of the invention is found in the circumstance that the necessary electrical connections between one carriage and another is carried through the same india-rubber tube which operates the brake—that is to say, the operation of joining up the brake-tube between carriage and carriage also establishes

electrical communication throughout the train between passenger, guard, and engine-driver. Such an apparatus has long been needed to replace the wholly inadequate contrivances at present in use on our railways, which are generally reported to have 'failed to act' when occasion for their use has arisen.

THE SALMON AND ITS FOOD.

It has long been a question among naturalists and anglers whether or not salmon and its near allies feed in fresh water, for it is a fact that food is rarely discovered in the stomach of a salmon, sea-trout, or seven which has been in fresh water for any length of time. The subject has been commented upon from the time of Izaak Walton, and has formed the theme of many a discussion among fresh-water anglers. With a view to settle this interesting question, the Fishery Board of Scotland have made a series of investigations, and as a result have issued a report on the life-history of the salmon. This report is edited by Dr D. Noel Paton, who has been assisted in his work by many experts. The general conclusions arrived at are: (1) That there is no reason why salmon should feed during their stay in fresh water, as their bodies contain sufficient nourishment for all their requirements. (2) During their stay in fresh water the material accumulated in the muscles steadily diminishes, and there is no indication of the loss being made good by food. (3) There is every indication that during this period the organs of digestion are functionless. The case of

the salmon, it is pointed out, is not exceptional in this power of abstaining from food for a long period—the male fur-seal, after coming to land, being able to live for more than three months without food. It would seem that this characteristic of the *salmonide* is a wise provision of Nature, for in some of the small rivers to which salmon resort for spawning purposes there could not be found sufficient nourishment to meet their wants if they retained the enormous appetites which they have while at sea. Anglers at least are glad to know that, although salmon are not regular feeders in fresh water, they are not averse to an occasional snap at a fly.

A NEW TORPEDO-NET.

As a protection against the action of torpedoes, our warships were provided with wire-netting shields, or crinolines, which can be extended by spars, so as to form a wall around the vessel's sides. Upon which some ingenious inventor gave the travelling fish-shaped destroyer an enting implement at its head which could penetrate the wire screen. A new form of crinoline has now been introduced which possesses a mesh of such construction that it cannot be pierced. But the invention probably comes too late; for if any lesson is to be learned from recent events, it is that the torpedo in naval warfare is of such secondary importance that it may be almost neglected altogether. We have learned lately that fighting ships armed with modern guns need not get to close quarters to work terrible destruction upon one another. A couple of miles separating the attacking vessel and that with which she is engaged is regarded as a near range; and no torpedo is effective at a quarter that distance. Quick-firing guns and accurate marksmanship are the far more important items to attend to, and American perfection in both these respects has really determined the issue in the present war.

A MOUSE MOTOR.

It has become the fashion among enterprising traders to attract attention to their shop windows by the exhibition of some moving object, generally actuated by clockwork. A distinctly novel idea in this direction is that recently adopted by certain American bicycle dealers, who have succeeded admirably in not only attracting attention to their wares, but in showing at the same time the perfection of their workmanship. They show, in brief, how the wheel of a cycle may be driven by mouse-power. The bicycle is either attached to a frame or hung to the ceiling—so that the front wheel is clear of the ground and can run easily. Just above the top of this wheel and fixed to the steering head of the machine is a mouse-cage with no bottom, but so close to the tyre that the animal within has no room to escape. The weight of the mouse is sufficient to give the wheel an initial movement, and the poor

little creature trying to run to a refuge provided for it in the cage keeps up the motion in treadmill fashion. Usually there are two mice in each cage, and one or the other is generally doing work on the wheel.

POLAR EXPLORATION.

The *Fram*, which did such good service in Nansen's expedition, has once more started northwards from Christiania under the capable leadership of Captain Otto Sverdrup. The chief objects of this second Norwegian expedition is to discover the northern limits of Greenland, and to study the formation and trace the origin of the palæocrystic ice, while many problems of minor importance will be left for solution to the five scientific men who constitute part of the staff of the ship. The *Fram* has been much altered and improved in various ways, and the expedition carries a very complete outfit of necessary apparatus in the way of sledges, canoes, &c., with a large number of dogs. Antarctic exploration does not seem just now to be faring quite so well as it might. Failing to obtain the expected support for the enterprise from the British Government, the Council of the Royal Geographical Society are endeavouring to obtain the necessary funds to start a Southern expedition under their own auspices, and they are inviting subscriptions towards that end. At least fifty thousand pounds will be required to defray the expenses, and the society itself heads the list with one-tenth of that amount.

TESTING COAL BY THE X-RAYS.

M. Couriot has demonstrated in a note communicated to the Paris Academy that the Röntgen rays can be profitably employed in the examination of coal, peat, lignite, coke, &c. Pure carbon, whether it be in the form of coal or diamond, is perfectly transparent to these rays, while the flinty matter which goes to make up the slag and clinker-forming portions of the fuel is opaque. If, therefore, a sample of coal be examined by means of the rays and a fluorescent screen, the amount of carbon as compared to less valuable constituents can be very readily determined. It is a curious characteristic of these rays that most of the bodies which are transparent to the eye—with the exception of a few, including the diamond and mica—are quite opaque when examined by this method; while coal, charcoal, jet, &c. are perfectly transparent, as noted by M. Couriot.

THE POTTER'S WHEEL.

One of the oldest mechanical contrivances known is the potter's wheel, the products of which, dating many centuries before our era, are dug up in all parts of the world. It is still in common use; but the recent manufacture by a totally different method of a very common piece of pottery—namely, the flower-

pot—suggests the reflection that more valuable specimens of earthenware may possibly be turned out by the new process. A machine by which flower-pots can be produced at the rate of sixteen per minute, and at half the cost of the older process, the invention of Mr William West, a well-known orchid-grower, was recently exhibited at Walthamstow, Essex—in which district there happens to be many pottery-works, where perhaps the introduction will not at first be regarded with the favour which it deserves. The new machine presses the clay into a mould, and turns out pots smooth in the interior, less liable to fracture than those of ordinary make, and so dry that they can be placed in the kiln almost immediately.

A NEW BULLET.

It is not altogether pleasant reading for a man of humane disposition to learn that the War Office has adopted a new bullet, on the ground that the ordinary Lee-Metford missile is not deadly enough. Although the Lee-Metford has a terribly long range, it does not disable an enemy as effectively as is thought desirable, men being known to have gone on fighting after half-a-dozen such bullets have gone through their bodies. Such a bullet, too, has been known to pass through two or three men consecutively, penetration being its characteristic rather than shock. The new bullet has the same diameter (.303), length, and weight as the Lee-Metford, with a nickel case filled only partly with lead, the conical end being left empty. Its action on entering the body is to open out and lodge there; and it is spoken of as the 'man-killing bullet' in contradistinction to the piece of lead which it supersedes, which is known as the 'man-penetrating bullet.' This new and ghastly messenger of death is being manufactured at Woolwich at the rate of two million rounds of ball cartridge per week, and it will be used for the first time in the Soudan expedition.

THE EVOLUTION OF SMALL ARMS.

An interesting paper with the above title was lately read at the Royal United Service Institution by Lieutenant-colonel Lockyer, chief inspector of small arms. The lecturer showed how the old muzzle-loading Enfield was in 1866 superseded by the breech-loading Snider, a mere stop-gap until something better could be introduced. This happened in 1871, when the Martini-Henry weapon—in his opinion the best military breech-loader ever made—was adopted. Then came the cry for magazine rifles; and in order to keep pace with other European nations the Lee-Metford was adopted in our service, certain alterations being subsequently made in the arm, such as the enlargement of the magazine to hold ten instead of eight cartridges and the substitution of cordite for black gunpowder. A great advance was made when one description of cartridge was adopted for

all rifles, carbines, and machine-guns. The lecturer said that for a long time it had been his desire to see one universal pattern of firearm in the hands of all services, and the weapon which he favoured was the carbine. It weighed two pounds less than the rifle; and although it did not make such absolutely accurate target practice as the rifle, it was far more handy in the field, where bull's-eye shooting was not required. With regard to machine-guns, he believed that their evolution was still in progress. The Maxim, although a good weapon, could scarcely be called an ideal automatic gun. What was wanted was one which could go on firing steadily and certainly, it being a minor consideration whether it projected three hundred or six hundred shots per minute. Lord Charles Beresford, who occupied the chair on the occasion of the lecture, expressed the opinion that if the carbine were the better weapon it ought to be adopted, but that it would not be advisable to make such a sweeping change without practical test on a field of action.

LUCIFER-MATCHES.

It is to be hoped that the agitation which has recently been made with reference to the terrible disease common in match-factories, and known among the poor workers as 'phossy jaw,' will lead to the abandonment of the employment of yellow phosphorus in the manufacture of matches. It would seem that the settlement of the matter is really in the hands of the public, for if all people would insist on using safety-matches only—we mean those that will only strike on the box in which they are contained—the use of yellow phosphorus would cease. This chemical gives off a poisonous vapour which, when inhaled by the match-workers, leads to a most fearful disease, which principally attacks the jawbone. As long ago as the year 1848 it was discovered that when phosphorus was exposed to heat under certain conditions it assumed a new form, its yellow colour changing to red, no poisonous vapour rising from it, while at the same time it could no longer be ignited by simple rubbing. Excellent matches were at once made, the chemical being mixed with sulphite and antimony, and painted on the box, while the matches themselves consisted of a composition innocent of phosphorus, but which would ignite when brought into contact with it. The patent for these safety-matches has long ago run out, and any one is free to make them. Yet to save themselves a little trouble a large section of the public prefers matches of the older pattern, and a demand is therefore created for an article the manufacture of which is fraught with evil to the workers. The man who invents a match made with red phosphorus, which will strike on any rough surface, will not only reap a large fortune, but will be a public benefactor. It is satisfactory to note that an inquiry into the subject of making lucifer-matches

with yellow phosphorus has been ordered by the Home Secretary.

POULTRY-FARMING.

A report has recently been issued by the agricultural department of the Lancashire County Council, which gives the results of an elaborate experiment carried out for the Council by Mr Thomas Carr, who maintained that it was possible to keep fowls confined to a grass run, or at liberty about a farm-yard, in a healthy condition, at the rate of 200 to one acre, and to show a profit of not less than five shillings per fowl from egg production per annum. A plot of land at Preston was set aside for the experiment, on which was built, under Mr Carr's direction, a roosting-house, a laying-house, and two shelters. A special feeding-trough was used, from which the fowls—thirty in number—would scratch the contents, while they could not spoil it. Sufficient food for the day—consisting of 11 parts Indian meal, 11 parts cockle-seed, and 2 parts bone-dust, and sometimes corn screenings and mixed peas—was placed in the trough each morning. The experiment continued for a year, careful accounts being kept of the cost of food, &c.; the number of eggs laid during the period being 3780, fetching a shilling per dozen. The balance-sheet shows a profit of nearly nine pounds; but it is only fair to note that there is nothing allowed for labour, and experience has taught us that even on a small scale fowls cannot be economically kept without a considerable amount of attention. But the experiment plainly proves that cottagers and others who have the opportunity of giving poultry space and attention can make them pay, provided that they are in reach of a market for the eggs, to say nothing of the chickens, for which there is always a demand.

THE FRESCOES AT WESTMINSTER PALACE.

The wall paintings in the Houses of Parliament have, during the last two years, been undergoing a cleansing and restorative process, under the able direction of Professor Church, and a parliamentary paper has recently been published showing the progress of the work. Here mention is made of an apparatus of novel design which the Professor has devised, and which he hopes will prove an effective aid in his work. This contrivance produces a powerful air-blast charged with bread crumbs, which can thus be projected upon the surface of the paintings. The apparatus has been returned to the makers for certain modifications, and the Professor hopes to employ it advantageously when the required alterations are completed.

SEA-SICKNESS.

In the notes on sea-sickness which Dr Hugh Taylor contributes to the *Lancet* there is not much comfort to be derived by the sufferer from that distressing ailment. He tells us—speaking from a five years' experience in the North Atlantic

passenger service—that the doctor has no means, either by drugs or otherwise, of controlling the sickness; something which may act as a palliative to a patient during one voyage being useless the next. He has never seen any of the quack remedies do the slightest good; and although he has seen relief afforded by certain remedies which he names, his remarks go to show that regulation of the general health is, after all, the best safeguard from the more distressing forms of *mal de mer*. A farewell dinner or jollification is, he tells us, the worst possible preparation for a sea voyage; a far more sensible, but less festive, prescription being a blue pill and seidlitz powder.

'THE WHITE HEATHER.'

I BRIBED you with a promise,
One idle August day,
To guide you where the heather rare
Concealed its charmed white spray;
And as we went together
I dreamed, 'twixt hope and fear,
The fairy flower would give me power
To tell you all, my dear.

Though love had made me silent,
Mine eyes could call you fair.
You hummed a song the way along
To show you did not care.
The honey-hearted heather
Sprang ripely far and near;
And many a flower was red that hour,
But none was white, my dear.

Some blooms were rudely ruddy,
And some were palely pink,
And some so light—nay, almost white—
We had to stop to think.
And once an alien daisy
Made you exclaim, "'Tis here!'
Ah! many an hour we sought the flower
And found it not, my dear.

I doubt my search turned careless.
Perhaps the treasure grew
Snow-pure and sweet before my feet
Those times I looked at you.
Yet, is Romance in ruins
Because, as eve drew near,
I found the power, without the flower,
To tell you all, my dear?

J. J. BELL.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE GOLDEN BARS.

By JOHN STAFFORD, Author of *Vicar of Wrocksley*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

DAME DRUCE sat in the porch toying and taling gooseberries. That is a task which frees the mind and allows of excursive thinking, as every one knows who has tried it; and Dame Druce, whose brain was of nimble sort, liking always to be up and doing, was subjectively anywhere but in the garden porch of Springfields. Pleasure sat at her lips, and in her soft, dark eyes, which she would raise at whiles to dreamily gaze from, then lower again with a gentle rise and fall of bosom which told of a sigh of gladness. Apart from the intermittent chip-chop of a chaff-cutter away in the barn, and the distant humming of a threshing-machine, it was still and peaceful enough at the old farm; but presently there was a noise afoot which made the dame half-turn her head and stare anxiously away. Then she smiled, and looked down anew. The noise had ceased.

'What lungs, to be sure! an' only eight hours old! He'll be fit to shout sparrers from the corn by next harvest. Bless 'em both! She'll be another woman after this. She's been over lonesome at times, poor thing, wi' the master out so much.'

After a few minutes more of musing the dame looked up again, this time with a jerk. It was at the sound of footsteps approaching. The tread of them was heavy, and the gravel of the path gave loud protest; but it was some seconds ere the newcomer, who had entered by the little side wicket, became visible. Dame Druce had hardened her face for a beggar.

And not unlike a beggar's was the tall figure which paused in front of her. Shabby, unkempt, unwashed, with a chin of stubble, and a general hang-dog air all over him, Mark Ruthwood looked not at his best that morning. The dame's face said so with all its expression.

'Well, Mark, you've been drinking again. Your

hands are all of a shake, an' your eyes have the sunset in them. Was there ever such a sight in Shirley! We'll stand you in a field to scare the rooks. It would be a bold bird as would come within half a mile of you. Mark, you've drowned your self-respect, as well as your wits, an' your very soul must be panting for life after such seas of beer. When *will* you reform, Mark?'

'How is she now?' was all that Mark Ruthwood said, looking down at her.

'Why, it seems only yesterday when you was one o' the smartest young fellows in Shirley Kings; an' if you'd married all the lasses as lost their silly hearts on you, you'd have a dozen o' wives now to see that you shaved o' mornings. If you'd only kept your nose out o' Baxter's tankards you might a' been the squire's bailly by this, an' earning an honest living, 'stead o' creeping about under cover o' night an' stealing it. How many rabbits did you wire last night, I should like to know? The parish won't have a bunny left in it, if'—

'How is she now? I asked,' half-growled the man. 'How are *they*?'

The dame looked up with softer gaze.

'They are both doing well, Mark, an' a finer boy was never born in Shirley. Nine pounds if a pennyweight, an' as vigorous as a pike. An' yet the master's ridden off to Wanborough with eyes fit to fire a rick-yard, so ablaze wi' wrath they were. A hornet in the post-bag, I reckon; though he looked none too blithe before Simon brought it. He is such a man to worrit. He can't lose a cow wi' rinderpest without going on as if he'd lost a herd; an' now the grey mare is down wi' the glanders, he—— Mark!'

Ruthwood, who had turned impatiently away, looked back at her.

'Mark, you can have a job if you go down to the ten-acre field. They're cutting the oats, an' half the men have traped off to Berridge Fair.

SEPT. 3, 1898.

I'll lend you a hook an' a fagging-stick, if you care to earn the shillings. I know you can do your half-acre a day—or are you too lazy grown?' 'Lazy? No; it isn't that,' said Mark, with an ugly flash; 'it isn't that, dame.'

'Well, then, it's because your old bad feeling against master still rankles in you. I wonder you dare come nigh the place if the thought of him so poisons— But there! I didn't mean to hurt you, Mark. Will you do a little turn for me, an' I'll give you a cup o' cider? I want a few potatoes from the bottom garden. Sally will give you a bowl, an' you'll find a fork in the tool-shed. Thank you, Mark.'

Dame Druce paused at her task, and looked away with eyes which now had sorrow in them.

'Poor lad! poor lad!' she muttered. 'It's been going on now this six year, an' he's as much in the toils as ever. Why don't he leave the place an' put half the world 'twixt him an' Shirley, if only for her sake? He might know she could never have paired with him in spite of all the flirting; he'd no chance at all, comely as he was, against the master. Well, well! it's a sad tale, an' time hasn't done telling it, as far as I can see.'

The good lady bent to her work anew, and some minutes passed before she looked up again. A horseman at full gallop was nearing. She sat listening, and then rose.

'He's never been to Wanborough an' back in this time,' she said to herself; 'but that's Captain's gallop right enough, an' he's carrying a power o' wrath in the saddle if I'm not greatly mistaken.'

She looked in the direction of the yard, and with some misgiving saw that Ruthwood was there. He had earned his cup of cider, and was standing talking to Hugh the cowman. They both turned as the horseman drew nigh. They saw Godfrey Harvey. Hugh slunk away, but Mark stood his ground, while the young yeoman trotted through the open gate into the yard. Without doubt there was a good deal of wrath in Captain's saddle. There was more when the eyes of the two men met. Harvey pulled up.

'What are you doing here?'

The words came quietly enough, but there was an ominous shake behind them, and the yeoman's heated face had lost something of its colour. Mark looked at him square.

'Plainly, I am standing here, Godfrey Harvey.'

The other twitched, but held himself in.

'Did I not tell you,' he said in the same quiet way as before, 'that if I found you on any part of my property, whether farm or land, I should horsewhip you?'

Mark's fists tightened.

'For the sake of the sick one there, and the little life beside her, let us have no quarrel now. I'—

The whip was across his face before he could

say another word. It descended again, but Mark hooked his elbow and warded it. Again it cut the air, but with a quick upward thrust of his hand Mark caught it by the middle, and with a pull which nearly unseated the rider he wrested it away and flung it across to the dunghill. Harvey's feelings at this seemed to have paralysed him. He sat blazing down at Mark, who, longing to spring upon his assailant, stood wrestling with himself. All at once across the fearful silence came the small cry of a child. The yeoman's face changed as if he had thrown a mask off. He jumped from the saddle and turned to Dame Druce, who had come up wringing her hands.

'Here, dame; give this fellow a quart of beer and send him off. I must get indoors. Poor little devil! he may well cry at seeing the daylight of such a world as this, curse it!—Mark Ruthwood'—turning sharply round—'you crossed a desperate man just now. For both our sakes steer clear of me in future.—Hugh, put the cob up, and give him an extra dose of oats. He has earned it.'

Saying which Harvey passed rapidly into the house. Mark followed his figure till it had disappeared; then, with an odd look in his bloodshot eyes, as of a man dazed and yet murderously conscious, he turned and went his way.

It was Hugh who drank the quart.

'He took it quietly, ma'am,' said he over the lip of the pot.

'Ay, he took it quietly,' said Dame Druce; 'but the master might have followed his whip but for one thing.'

'And what might that have been, ma'am?' asked Hugh, who had only lately been hired at Swanley Mop.

'What might that have been? Give me the pewter, and get back to Captain.'

CHAPTER II.

FROM that day onwards certain rumours grew apace concerning the ancient farm of Springfields. By the end of a month the rumours had condensed to certainty. Then people shook their heads and wondered and sorrowed. It was such an old place, such an old family. Who in the county had been more looked up to and honoured than the Harveys? The talk traversed the length of generations, but dwelt mostly perhaps on the eccentric Silas Harvey, the great-grandfather of Godfrey.

In the inglenook of the 'Blue Boar' Mark Ruthwood sat one night and listened. But hardly with the air of an ordinary listener. Saying nothing, but keeping his best ear to the company, he sat with glistening eyes, betraying now and again a slight movement of the hands or a shuffling of the feet to show the tension of the moment's feeling. All he heard is of little concern here. But he seemed to have gathered enough when

closing-time came to strengthen some purpose, which, as he moved away, showed itself in all his bearing. He forgot his stoop, his slouching gait, his habitual listlessness. One might have said as he passed along that for the moment he was the Mark Ruthwood of old days, when as a farm student at The Uplands—Grace Harvey's old home—he had been considered the handsomest young fellow in Shirley Kings.

He walked on through the starlit ways musing of the inn-talk of the evening. Not that it was matter new to him, but that, hearing it afresh just now, it had taken a newer meaning. There are thoughts which flash upon us; thoughts which slowly evolve, born of a thousand others, like the cells of our tissues. Mark strode on, appearing to be in a blaze of mental light. And on his face was writ 'Eureka!' as plainly as nerves and muscles could make it. An odd result of village gossip concerning an eccentric yeoman.

Mark's father—long since dead—had done much to make Silas Harvey a kindly and interesting figure to his thoughts. As he went along now, he recalled—and not with idle purpose—that his father, as a boy, had been a great favourite with the old man; that he had had books given to him; that he had been allowed the run of the house; had been shown its secret places, its monk's hiding-places, and once—favour of favours—the entrance to the secret passage which, in older days, had connected Springfields with the Priory—now a shapeless ruin on the slope of the hill where the railway-cutting was.

All this, and much else, Ruthwood remembered as he tramped his way under the stars, following the guidance of the hedgerows, heedless apparently whither they led him; heedless of the hour, of everything, except the things his brain was busy with. He stopped at last at the

'who-who!' of an owl. He looked around. He had mounted a rise, and the remaining lights of Shirley Kings were visible to him, with one small glimmer from Springfields a few rods down the slope. The bird cried again, and Mark's head turned to the sound. It came from the ruined Priory. He stood gazing around; then mounted a gate near by, and walked slowly up the rise to the roofless remains of the ancient edifice. In ten minutes or so he reappeared, and returned with resolute steps to his lodgings at Shirley Kings.

Mark's candle was burning late that night. Besides his wasted but still handsome features, his unbrushed hair, his stubbly chin, his large but blood-streaked eyes, the little flame threw light on divers things—a couple of clay pipes, a half-used 'screw' of shag, a bottle of ink, and a number of letters and legal-looking papers which had evidently just been studied. With all these there were littered about a number of books—books of age, calf-covered, dog-eared, and generally shabby, but precious still, seemingly, to the ne'er-do-weel of Shirley—perhaps because they had belonged to his father. One of these he had in front of him now; not reading it, but poring intently over a faded fly-leaf which had on it a rude-looking drawing or plan. It was dated a few days before the death of Silas Harvey, and with a word here and there of direction declared its purpose undeniably. It was a guide to a hidden treasure.

Mark contemplated it, smiled slowly, and rubbed his hands. Then he leaned back and smiled up at the ceiling. But the plan on the fly-leaf drew down his eyes anew, and again he rubbed his hands.

'*Gil Blas!* once the property of Silas Harvey; now mine. His very name in the corner! What could be plainer?'

THE HAUNTED CHAMBER AT GLAMIS CASTLE.

A SUGGESTED SOLUTION OF THE MYSTERY.



HERE are few stories of haunted chambers in ancestral castles better known than that which is connected with Glamis Castle. Several variants of the tale are given; but these all have in common the notable peculiarity that the location of the mysterious chamber is unknown. In this respect the legend differs from the common ghost-story. It is not a bedroom where some crime has been committed, and which the spirit of the wronged person haunts at the midnight hour, causing terror and dismay in the heart of the luckless temporary guest. There are no indelible blood-marks shown; no clanking fetters are heard; no white lady is ever seen pacing the oaken floor with restless steps, and wailing her griefs upon

the startled air. So far as is known, the ghost of Glamis has hardly ever been seen by mortal eye; though sometimes, it is alleged, on stormy nights, when the wild wind whistles around the quaint towers and gables of the ancient structure, the sounds of blasphemous language may be heard above the raging fury of the elements. Hence the mystery of Glamis Castle is more profound than the average ghostly tale; and yet it may be possible to suggest a very simple explanation of it.

In 1791 Sir Walter Scott visited Glamis Castle, and he refers to this event in his famous *Quarterly Review* article on 'Landscape Gardening,' published in 1828, and also in his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, issued in 1830. The former deals only with the exterior of the Castle;

but in the latter Scott incidentally mentions the secret chamber, and describes his own 'eerie' feelings during the night which he spent at Glamis. Unfortunately Sir Walter did not relate any of the traditions which he heard in connection with Glamis Castle, though these would have been quite within the scope of his work.

The first reference in literature to the ghost of Glamis is to be found in *The Picture of Scotland*, by Robert Chambers, published by William Tait of Edinburgh in 1826. The passage forms the foundation of all later allusions, and may here be quoted :

'As in all other old Scottish castles, there is a room in Glamis supposed to be haunted, and therefore shut up. But in the intricacies of the Castle it is supposed that there is also one which, if discovered, would be found to present a scene far beyond the simple horrors of a haunted chamber. Alexander, the Earl of Crawford, so notorious in Scottish history for his rebellion against James II., is popularly known in Fife and Angus by the descriptive appellation of Earl Beardie, and is, moreover, invested with all the terrible attributes understood by the term "a wicked laird." Certes he was, according to Bishop Lesley, "a verrey awful and rigorus man to all baronnes and gentlemen of the euntry, and keist down mony of their honses in Angus quha wald nocht assist him, quhairof sindrey remains yit unbiggit again in this our dayis." It is the tradition of Glamis that he was playing at cards in the Castle, when, being warned to desist, as he was losing, he swore in a transport of fury that he would "play till the day of judgment." On this the devil appeared in the company, and they, room and all, disappeared. It is not known in what part of the house this room is situated, but it is well enough understood that, if ever discovered, Earl Beardie will be found, with all his party, still playing, and to play till the end of time. Some go the length of affirming that, on windy nights, the doomed gamesters are heard stamping their feet at one another, and mingling their impious exclamations with the passing blast.'

There can be no doubt that Robert Chambers obtained this tradition on the spot, and it is certain that the legend is still repeated in the district, and is well known wherever ghostly tales are current. The late Earl of Crawford and Balcarres (then Lord Lindsay) in his *Lives of the Lindsays*, published in 1836, relates the story almost in the words of Robert Chambers, referring to *The Picture of Scotland* for his authority. Andrew Jervise, in his *Land of the Lindsays*, published in 1853, alludes to the legend in the same terms. In the account of Glamis Castle given in A. H. Millar's *Historical Castles of Scotland*, published in 1890, some additional particulars are noted. The passage runs thus :

'There is a well-known tradition current in

Forfarshire to the effect that there is a mysterious chamber in Glamis, the entrance to which is only known to three persons at one time—the Earl, the heir-apparent, and the factor on the estate—and that 'Beardie,' the fourth Earl of Crawford, is confined within its walls, doomed, as the penance for a hasty vow, to play dice till the day of judgment. It is hopeless to convert lovers of legendary lore from their belief by telling them that an authentic record declares that Earl Beardie "tuik the hot fever and died in the year of God ane thousand four hundreth fifty-four years, and wes buried with great triumph in the Grey Friars of Dundee in his forebears' sepulchre;" but it would be wrong for the incredulous seoffer to conclude that the tradition as to a secret chamber is altogether unfounded. We have the best authority for stating that such an apartment exists, and that its entrance is concealed, though the story of Earl Beardie's connection with it is a popular delusion.'

Quite a different version of the Glamis legend is given by J. H. Ingram in *Haunted Homes*, published in 1884. This writer alludes to 'an ominous chamber, said to be now cut off by a stone wall, and none is supposed to be acquainted with its locality save Lord Strathmore, his heir, and the factor of the estate. This wall is alleged to have been erected some few years ago by order of the late proprietor, in consequence of certain mysterious sights and sounds which he had both seen and heard.' The late Earl of Strathmore succeeded to the title in 1846 and died in 1865, so that the period of this 'alleged' closing of the entrance to the haunted chamber must have occurred between these dates. The cause of this action on Lord Strathmore's part is given by Mr Ingram on the authority of a correspondent of Dr Lee, and is in these terms :

'There is no doubt about the reality of the noises at Glamis Castle. On one occasion, some years ago, the head of the family, with several companions, was determined to investigate the cause. One night, when the disturbance was greater and more violent and alarming than usual—and, it should be premised, strange, weird, and unearthly sounds had often been heard, and by many persons, some quite unacquainted with the ill-repute of the castle—his Lordship went to the haunted room, opened the door with a key, and dropped back in a dead swoon into the arms of his companions; nor could he ever be induced to open his lips on the subject afterwards.'

Dr Lee's informant supplies the only record of a spectral appearance at Glamis. The story is as follows :

'On one occasion a lady and her child were staying for a few days at the Castle. The child was asleep in an adjoining dressing-room, and the lady, having gone to bed, lay awake for a while. Suddenly a cold blast stole into the room, extinguishing the night-light by her bedside, but

not affecting the one in the dressing-room beyond, in which her child had its cot. By that light she saw a tall mailed figure pass into the dressing-room from that in which she was lying. Immediately thereafter there was a shriek from the child. Her maternal instinct was aroused. She rushed into the dressing-room, and found the child in an agony of fear. It described what it had seen as a giant, who came and leant over its face.'

Here are the details of the usual ghost-story, with the customary lack of corroboration. No other instance is known of the appearance of a figure, mailed or otherwise, at Glamis. It is important to notice that the only point in which all these stories agree is as to the existence of a secret chamber. One of the writers quoted above refers to this statement as being 'on the best authority.' The following incident, bearing upon this point, was related about thirty years ago by an aged, superannuated servant, who had long been in the service of the Strathmore family. On one occasion, early in the present century, when the Strathmore family was from home, some of the inquisitive domestics set themselves to discover the locality of the secret chamber. The plan they took was effectual. They went through every room in the castle, and placed towels outside of every window. There was one window which had no towel, and of course it was concluded that it belonged to the mystic room. It was said that when Lord Strathmore returned and found that the secret had been so far discovered, he dismissed the ringleaders in the conspiracy, and bound the others over to perpetual secrecy. To this day the exact position of this mysterious room is known only to three persons at one time.

An examination of the evidence shows that the oral tradition was in existence about a century ago, and that the earliest printed record dates back for over seventy years. Earl Beattie was dead three centuries and a half before the former time, yet his name may have survived as a nursery bugbear, just as that of the Black Douglas was used to terrify children in Sir Walter Scott's early days, as testified by the rhyme:

Hush ye, hush ye, do not fret ye,
The Black Douglas shall not get ye!

The evil reputation of Earl Beattie was a local Forfarshire superstition long after he had gone to receive the reward of his misdeeds. A story, therefore, which had any mystery connected with it would naturally be associated with his name. Hence the secret chamber at Glamis need not have been constructed previous to 1454—the date of Earl Beattie's death—so as to link his name with it. Indeed, it is far more likely to be an erection of a much later date, when the name of the 'Tiger Earl' had been canonised in an evil sense.

It may here be explained that many structural curiosities at Glamis Castle have been only recently discovered. A splendid fireplace in the drawing-

room, which was not known to exist, was accidentally found a few years ago; and a secret staircase, which appears to have been built about 1670, had been closed up, and was discovered in 1849, when some alterations were in progress. The principal renovator of the ancient Castle of Glamis was Patrick, first Earl of Strathmore, who was born in 1642 and died in 1695. In the *Book of Record*, written by this Lord Strathmore, and published by the Scottish History Society in 1890, he gives very full details of the work done by him at Glamis Castle. For instance, the construction of this back staircase, so long forgotten, is distinctly described; and from his references to certain leaden statues which he had erected in the grounds these works of art were recovered from their undignified seclusion in some of the cellars, and have been restored to their original positions.

When confronted with a mystery like that of the secret chamber, one naturally turns to the *Book of Record* to see if it contains any allusion to this apartment. The diligent student of that remarkable book will find two curious entries that seem to have some bearing on this subject. Writing on 24th June 1684, Lord Strathmore records the following transaction:

'Agried with the four masones in Glammiss for digging down from the floor of the lital pantry off the Lobbis a closet designed within the charter-house there, for w^{ch} I am to give them 50 lib. scotts and four bolls meall.'

The work of constructing this closet or small chamber was more serious than the Earl had contemplated. Judging from similar chambers which he caused to be made at his other residence of Castle Lyon (now Castle Innitly) in the Carse of Gowrie, this closet was probably dug out of the thickness of the wall. On 25th July there is another reference to this closet, which shows that its construction was an arduous undertaking:

'I did add to the work before mentioned of a closet in my charter-house severall things of a considerable trouble, as the digging thorow passages from the new work to the old, and thorow that closet againe so that as now I have access off on flour [one floor] from the east quarter of the house of Glammiss to the west syde of the house thorow the low hall, and am to pay the masones, because of the uncertainty y^e of dayes wages, and just so to the wright and plasterer.'

From these precise entries it is plain that in 1684 the first Earl of Strathmore caused a secret chamber or closet to be constructed, with an entrance from the charter-room. This was by no means an unusual thing, for many noble Scottish families have had frequent occasion to conceal documents that would have compromised them in times of war, and even a charter-room might not have been secure against the searches by enemies. The first Lord Strathmore himself, for instance,

was deeply implicated in a Jacobite plot with the Earls of Southesk and Callander in 1689; and though he afterwards became reconciled to William III., it would be useful for him to have a secure hiding-place for treasonable papers. Several of his descendants were concerned in the risings of 1715 and 1745, and a chamber of this kind would be useful either to secrete documents or to afford shelter to a fugitive. The third Earl of Strathmore died of wounds he received at Sheriffmuir in 1715. By that time the masons who had constructed the secret chamber thirty years before would have passed away, and the lingering

rumours of its existence would be linked in the popular mind with the mysterious Earl Beaudie. For obvious reasons the successive Earls of Strathmore would not seek to dispel this superstition, and thus the simple 'closet designed within the charter-room' has been elevated to the dignity of a haunted chamber. At least this suggestion is a reasonable one. Certainly the secret of this mysterious closet has been faithfully kept alike by the Earls of Strathmore and their factors. In the middle of last century this secrecy was of vital importance. It has since become habitual and traditional.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

CHAPTER V.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY IS DISAPPOINTED.



WHEN Mrs Clitherow presently returned with the tea-tray, and proved herself generally sympathetic, Ruth satisfied her natural curiosity by relating how, since her father had left them in somewhat straitened circumstances, she had resolved to support herself until, at least, their affairs at Cablethorpe took a more favourable turn. Her sister Hettie—as Mrs Clitherow already knew—took an active interest in the business; nor was she unacquainted with the fact that her brother Gabriel had 'gone abroad'; but nothing of the true cause of the disaster had reached the landlady's ears. Ruth did not think it needful to enlighten her further on family matters.

'Ah well, my dear,' was Mrs Clitherow's comment when Ruth had concluded, 'what a world it is—aren't it? But come! Now that you're rested a bit, won't you go and say "How d'ye do" to Captain Tudway?'

The captain had just dropped asleep in his arm-chair—his usual habit after dinner—when there came a knock at his door. That he should be dreaming at that very moment about his nephew and Hettie Beek—dreaming that he had bought Edward a partnership in Beek & Son's business, and that Hettie had become his wife—was natural enough. He had been thinking of little else for weeks past—ever since the day that Edward went to join his ship. In fact, it had been his pet idea—the dream of his life—from the hour that the ship-breaker's daughter had run into his room in the days when he was himself an able-bodied seafaring man. In compliance with his gruff, sleepy injunction to 'come in,' Ruth now appeared, and the captain, looking up blinking, exclaimed:

'Bless my eyes! What cheer, my dear?' and clapped his knee to wake himself up completely.

'Why, who would ha' thought it? Come in, come in. How's Hettie?'

When Ruth had brought a chair to the captain's side and had kissed him on his weather-beaten cheek—because she had known him so many years—she said: 'Hettie is well. Have you news of Ted?'

'Why, no, no. Have you?'

She assured him that no news had come to them since Tudway had paid them a hurried visit on his way to London to join his ship.

'Ah!' said the captain, with one of his knowing winks, 'just dropped alongside to wish Hettie good-bye, didn't he?'

'Yes.' And Ruth drew a deep sigh.

Captain Tudway had still a keen enough ear. 'What's in the wind?' said he suspiciously. 'Speak plainly, my dear. Hettie isn't a-going to throw my nephew over, is she?'

Ruth stared blankly into the captain's face.

'What can you mean?' said she in an under-breath. 'Hettie has never promised to marry him.'

'Never promised to be Ed'ard's wife?'

'Never! I wish she had,' said Ruth. 'If she marries any one now, Captain Tudway, I—I think it will be John.'

The captain looked perplexed. Then suddenly clutching at the arms of his chair, he exclaimed, 'Bless my eyes! You can't mean John Jarvis?'

'Yes, I do,' said Ruth in a broken voice. 'John has been devoted to her for years. And now—I mean ever since father's death—they are thrown together over the timber business, and'—

'Stop a bit,' said the captain; 'let me think it Het—Hettie never promised to be Ed'ard's wife?'

Captain Tudway looked frowningly towards an arm-chair on the opposite side of the hearth where his nephew had sat on the night before

he had last set sail. Maybe in the dim light of the lamp overhead, or in the confused state into which his brain was thrown by Ruth's words, he supposed for the moment that Edward was there. Hadn't Edward led him to believe, when they drank Hettie's health in that parting glass, that the dream of his life was on a fair way towards fulfilment at last?

Ruth began to perceive that there had been some misunderstanding, and she now hastened to do her best to make the situation evident to the captain. 'Let me tell you,' said she, 'what Hettie told me the very day after Edward's visit. They went on board your old ship, and had a talk together in your cabin. He asked her to be his wife, and Hettie, confessing to him that father's business was in a bankrupt condition, would not hear of any engagement. Even if she loved Edward—and she told me she had very grave doubts—she would never promise to be his wife when father was on the brink of ruin. I wish with all my heart she cared for Edward!—with all my heart I do.'

Long after Ruth had left him—long after the little household had retired to rest—Captain Tudway sat there conning over all the girl had disclosed.

In that old cabin on board the *Nancy*, where the dream had been first conceived, his nephew and Hettie had met and scattered all his secret projects for their happiness to the four winds. That Edward loved Hettie Beek—and with all the constancy of a first love—the captain could not doubt. But since the girl had rejected him—if he had understood Ruth rightly—and the ship-breaking partnership must be rejected too, the chances were that any thoughts his nephew might have entertained of making this voyage his last one would now be abandoned. He would have an increased zest for the sea; for a seafaring existence, with a ship of his own instead of a wife, had been old Captain Tudway's own destiny. That was how he had met a disappointment in early life. His nephew would experience the same fate.

He sat brooding over his pipe until midnight was past. Then he rose with difficulty, leaning on a stick which he kept within reach, and limped across the room. He stopped beside the sea-chest; and, after several futile efforts, which were accompanied by suppressed groans, he succeeded in kneeling down. He unlocked the chest and drew forth, one by one, a number of canvas bags. He placed these bags on a table and sat down before them. They contained the gold with which he had thought to buy a share in Beek and Son's business. He heaped up the sovereigns before him, and contemplated the pile with a rueful face. With his elbows on the table and his head resting upon his hand, his appearance would have suggested the miser to any casual observer. But there was, in truth, nothing avaricious in Captain Tudway's nature. His one

thought while amassing this wealth had been for his nephew's happiness. He had seen in its glitter the possible realisation of a dream that to a miser would have been a constant source of mental torture and disquietude. It was like the preparation of a feast to which the captain had secretly entertained thoughts of inviting others, and with the knowledge that his own enjoyment of it all would be increased thereby. He had been reluctantly compelled to sit down to it alone to-night, and without an appetite. There was only one touch of the miser in his present mood—the gold which he had heaped up year after year with accumulating delight was the only substantial part of the dream that remained to him now; and he felt less inclination to part with it.

The noise in the great thoroughfare, which had begun at daybreak, gradually succeeded in waking Ruth. At first she had a confused idea as to where she was and what all the noise meant. But the whole truth soon dawned upon her. Mrs Clitherow had given her a small garret beside her own; and when Ruth presently drew up the blind and looked out upon the forest of smoking chimneys which formed one of the background-views of Nelson Square, her heart began to sink within her. How different to the familiar sight of grassy fenlands from her own bedroom window at Cablethorpe! She sat down with her elbows resting upon the diminutive toilet table, her head between her hands, thinking—thinking. She began to realise what serious anxiety her impulsive flight was probably causing Hettie, and she determined to send her a telegram acquainting her with her London address before another hour had gone by. Still, she had no thought of abandoning her project. She had already had some talk with Mrs Clitherow, and was full of the hope that, by giving lessons in music, she might be enabled to earn the few shillings a week which would be needed in order to support herself in this modest lodging.

Some days went by. Hettie had written imploring Ruth to return; but Ruth's only answer was, 'Impossible!' In her walks about London in search of pupils she had plenty to occupy her thoughts. Pupils did not come to her with the rush she had anticipated, though she offered to teach them upon terms that would have appeared incredible to herself a week ago. Her troubles had commenced. She was beginning to have some serious fears that she would soon be getting into Mrs Clitherow's debt. But another thing worried her still more. She could never drive John out of her thoughts. The one motive which had actuated her flight had not been achieved. At the moment of waking each morning his name was on her lips; for in her dreams at night, as in her day-dreams, he was ever before her. Many a slight incident which she had never thought to recall came back to her in vivid detail. Nor

were her reflections of him uniformly pleasing, for John's enduring love for Hettie frequently loomed hauntingly in the background. Still, no recollection of John, however distressful, helped in the least degree to lessen her passion for him. Indeed, she had defeated her own object by her selfish and impetuous step. Instead of blotting out the past, instead of acquiring through this independent course that peace of mind for which she had eagerly craved, she had intensified the memory of it a thousand times.

Then her health began to fail. A morning's walk in London, often fraught with bitter disappointments, wearied her almost beyond endurance. It was upon such a day, after a fatiguing pilgrimage to a distant part of London, that Ruth was met by Mrs Clitherow at the parlour door with mysterious, dumb signalling to step into her room.

'What is it?' said Ruth, unduly alarmed.

'You would never guess. Shall I tell you? Well, then! I've let the drawing-room, my dear,' said Mrs Clitherow, 'at last.'

'Indeed!'

'But that's not all,' said the landlady, with a bright look; 'my new lodger is a friend of yours.'

Ruth's heart began to beat painfully fast. 'Who?'

'He's all alone,' said Mrs Clitherow evasively. 'Run and see for yourself.'

With a faltering step Ruth made her way to the drawing-room floor, knocked timidly, and went in. By the early twilight that looked in across Nelson Square, Ruth saw a man seated with his back to the windows and his hands clasped behind his head. He glanced round, but made no effort to rise. Ruth started, and uttered a cry: 'Gabriel!'

It was her brother. He was a handsome, broad-shouldered fellow of thirty, with a round, good-natured face. Those who had known the father thirty years ago saw him again in this short-necked, thick-set son. He was the last person Ruth had expected to find here. She had believed with every one else that he had gone abroad.

'Sit down, Ruth,' said Gabriel Beck, stretching out his legs lazily. 'I thought I'd give you a surprise! You wouldn't have come up, you know, if you had known who the new lodger was; would you?'

He glanced at her in a shifty way. He never looked long at any one.

'Yes; I should have come, Gabriel,' said Ruth. Then she added: 'Is it all true, this charge that lawyer Burtenshaw has brought against you?'

Gabriel bit his lip. 'It's like you, Ruth,' said he, 'not to condemn me unheard! I— But first of all, let me hear Burtenshaw's version of the affair.'

She told him in a few words. Mr Burtenshaw had given him the cheque for three thousand

pounds against his signature to the mortgage deed. With this money, the lawyer had led them to believe, he had gambled, lost, and then left the country. Her recital brought from him an exclamation of anger.

'Let me speak!'

'Yes; tell me the truth,' said she.

He had a soft, irresistible voice. 'I will! I've no wish to justify my conduct. I candidly admit that I've been greatly to blame,' said Gabriel, with a frankness of manner that would have deceived almost any one unacquainted with his true character. 'But Burtenshaw was the man who deliberately planned the whole business. He threw temptation in my way. He set a trap for me, and I fell into it. Ah! nobody knows the man as I do.'

'Don't look like that,' said Ruth, startled by the vindictive glare that came into his eyes. 'It shocks me more than I can express.'

The look softened. He glanced hopelessly round the room. 'I am a gambler. Can I help my nature?' said he, showing himself, in a word, the pitiable creature that he was. 'The moment that Burtenshaw found my weakness out he began his machinations. He knew that we were in money difficulties, and he suggested a mortgage on the estate. It was cunningly contrived. That three thousand pounds was placed enticingly in my way. I'll tell you how he managed it. I met him in the market-place at Alford, apparently by chance, and he asked me to step into his office. He showed me the mortgage deed. He had got father's signature already. Mine was wanted. He called in his clerk as witness, and the matter was settled. He then handed me the cheque. I saw in a twinkling 'twas an open cheque—one that could be turned into hard cash. I began to understand; and my hesitation to accept it—my suggestion that he had better pay it into the bank—brought a queer look to his face. Ruth,' added Gabriel, with a gesture of sudden despair, 'that look of his decided me. If he had told me in so many words that I was a gambler—that I had not the moral courage to resist this chance—it would have had no effect upon me compared with that look. It was an unspoken insult. I pocketed the cheque and went out. Before the bank closed I had changed the cheque into notes and gold.'

'Were you mad?'

'I was mad. I was like one haunted by demons. They pursued me. It was impossible to resist the whispered promises of wealth. The chink, chink as of gold was constantly in my ear, and the sound roused visions of a fortune that seemed almost realised.'

Ruth put her hand before her eyes.

'I played heavily and won. But,' pursued Gabriel, 'my luck changed. Only a few hundreds remained. I turned my back upon cards and determined to go abroad.'

'You didn't go?'

'No. I'm in the City. I've started a timber syndicate,' said he carelessly, 'and my fortune has begun to mend.'

For a while they were silent. Ruth was the first to speak. 'Have you,' said she—'have you never thought of going home?'

Gabriel's face flushed. 'I have never ceased to think of going home,' said he, in a subdued tone of anger that startled Ruth; 'and when I do go home, let Burtenshaw look to himself—and John too!'

'John—John Jarvis! What has he done?'

Gabriel regarded his sister with surprise. 'What has he done? Why, you know that he tried his best for years to turn father against me. He wanted to step into my place. When he failed in that quarter he went to Burtenshaw. They planned the whole of this business between them; but I'll be even with them yet.'

Ruth fired up at this. 'John's a man of honour. He wouldn't stoop to plot with lawyer Burtenshaw against our house,' said she; 'on the contrary, he has done everything in his power, since father died, to save the business.'

'Ah, you always did take John's part,' said Gabriel, 'and against me, too! Who's Jarvis, I should like to know?' he added sneeringly.

'The best friend we've ever had,' cried Ruth. 'My worst enemy,' said Gabriel. 'I hate him! When I think of the man—when I think of all his insolence and opposition—I could strike him down. It's a wonder we've never come to blows. We shall yet.'

He rose as he spoke, with his face so flushed and his gesture so threatening that Ruth caught him by the arm. 'Gabriel, Gabriel!'

Again recalled to himself, he mastered his anger and sank back in his chair, and sat there breathing hard like a baffled bulldog. Ruth regarded this incident with intense concern. Gabriel's enmity had revived; there was no moral influence such as her father had exerted over him to check it now; and she began to entertain serious fears for John's safety.

Then came the terrible recollection of her own helpless position. At any moment Gabriel might start for Cablethorpe, as he had threatened to do, and bring other and greater disasters upon the house! She had been warned. John was in peril; but what could she do all these miles from her home to avert a catastrophe! She sat in her garret lodging in Nelson Square, deep into the night, with her throbbing head resting on her hands—thinking, thinking.

MILITARY RIFLES, AND HOW THEY ARE MADE.



NOW that a new rifle of the latest pattern is in the hands of all our home forces—Regular, Militia, and Volunteer—it may be of interest to the general public to know how these rifles are made, and what the weapon is that 'Tommy Atkins' holds with which to defend his Queen, his country, and himself.

Judging from the results attained by Volunteers in the shooting for the Queen's Prize at Bisley this year and also last year, when seventy-six men in the first six hundred were able to put on 'possibles'—that is, seven bull's-eyes in seven shots at five hundred yards, it may fairly be claimed that in the Lee-Metford rifle we possess the finest weapon held by any nation, and one that is immensely superior to any other.

As we examine the two types of firearms in use in 1815 and 1898, a feeling of amusement strikes one at the idea of the 1815 one being in any degree considered a weapon of precision; but we cannot forget the fact that with it, imperfect as it was, our troops held their own and defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. Just about the time our beloved Queen came to the throne, a great improvement was made in the means of exploding the charge, a percussion-cap being substituted for the flint and steel; and in 1842 a percussion smooth-bore musket was put into use. Other improvements followed in quick succession.

For some time it had been a known fact that by means of spiral grooves cut in the bore of the barrel, and using a conical bullet, the bullet would be caused to spin and so take a straighter course; so that, about the time of the commencement of the Crimean war, the 'Enfield rifle' superseded the smooth-bore musket, and was found to be a great improvement on all previous weapons, and, although a muzzle-loader, did good work in that campaign, the men who formed 'The Thin Red Line' having to trust to that and cold steel for their protection. About 1865 a system of loading from the breech was adopted, and was at once proved to be a great improvement. The 'Enfield' was converted to the breech-loading system, and in that form was known as the 'Snider,' from the name of the inventor of the system. After a few years an entirely new rifle was adopted by the War Office, in the shape of the Martini-Henry. This rifle was on what is known as the 'falling-block' system, and was a splendid weapon, with a calibre of .45 inch; and, as the results of the shooting done with it show, it was very accurate, would stand a lot of knocking about, and was easily kept in order. It was discarded by the regular army about 1890, when it was considered necessary to adopt some form of rifle which could be loaded and fired with greater rapidity; the present rifle—that is, the 'Lee-Metford'—being the one decided upon. The 'Martini' was still in use

by the volunteers until the end of 1896, when the task of replacing it by the 'Lee-Metford' was commenced, and by the time this article appears the whole of our British forces will be armed with the same type of weapon.

The new rifle is, according to the 'Red Book,' a magazine-rifle with a 'bolt action,' a .303 bore, and the Metford system of rifling. Taking the most important part—the barrel—first, we will suppose the reader to go through the Royal Small-arms Factory, Birmingham, where they are made from the rough material. Here we see the ordinary outfit of a large smiths' shop, with the addition of a powerful steam-hammer fitted with dies of the shape of the barrel in the rough. Standing at the forge are the smiths with several rods of mild steel about an inch and a half thick and about two feet long in the fire getting white-hot. Seizing one of these in a pair of tongs, one man places the glowing mass on the die constituting the anvil of the hammer; another man pulls over a lever, and a succession of deafening blows are rained on the plastic material, which seems as soft as putty, and in a few seconds we see the rod of steel drawn to nearly twice its former length, with a portion at one end about four inches long left about an inch thick. After cooling, these rough barrels are stacked in a store until they are required by the 'driller.' In the older form of rifle the barrels were made by winding a ribbon of steel on a mandrel and forging together, so forming a tube which was bored out afterwards. Now the barrels are forged solid and drilled through, the drilling being commenced at each end, the holes meeting in the middle.

The operation of drilling is one requiring great care, as the hole to be bored is very long, with a diameter of barely a quarter of an inch. The drills are kept cool while doing their work by means of a stream of soap and water injected into the hole by pneumatic pressure. After the barrels are drilled they are bored out and polished. This is an operation of the greatest nicety; as, when the barrel has left the boring-machine, a gauge is placed in one end of the hole and the tester's thumb at the other, and if the barrel is bored correctly the column of air will support the gauge when the barrel is held upright, and will allow it to pass through quite easily when the thumb is removed. After boring, the barrel is examined for faults, and if passed is handed to the 'rifler,' who presides over a cleverly-constructed machine which cuts the seven spiral grooves in the barrel which cause the bullet to spin and so go straight to the billet it is intended to reach. After rifling, the outside of the barrel comes in for attention and is turned to proper size; the rear end is chased with a screw to attach it to the body; the chamber to receive the cartridge is bored out, the outside polished, and several minor details executed, when it is

ready to be tested at the 'proof-house.' If it passes this ordeal satisfactorily it is fitted with sight-block, fore and back sights, and is finally browned and stacked up, ready to be fitted to the other completed parts. As the rifle consists of about eighty parts it is not necessary to describe the details in the manufacture of each part minutely; but the forging of components is the same in each case—that is, all the parts are roughly stamped by a steam die as nearly the necessary shape when complete as possible.

The next part to the barrel in importance is the body—that part which carries the bolt and has the important duty of holding the barrel, stock, and butt together. This portion undergoes, from the time it is forged by the smiths, an amount of shaping, drilling, slotting, and screwing which leaves one almost in doubt as to whether any of it will be left; but when it has finally left the shaping machines, and is ready to be case-hardened in parts and browned, is a most beautiful specimen of what modern appliances can do in shaping up irregular masses into smoothly-working mechanism. Roughly speaking, the cost of labour alone in making the body is eleven shillings. The bolt is the next important item: this, when seen in the finished state, is not unlike the familiar bolt which the careful householder pushes along at night when he wishes to close his door against unwelcome intruders. Upon examination it is seen to be hollow, and contains the striker which explodes the cartridge, and the mainspring, a long spiral spring. A piece screwed into the front end is called the bolt-head, and is used to carry the extractor and also to retain the bolt in its place; and a curiously-shaped piece at the rear end called the 'cocking-piece' has the 'striker' screwed into it. After the bolt is fitted, the trigger, with its spring, sear, and guard are fitted, a long bolt to hold the butt to the body is tapped into the body, and the working parts of the rifle are practically completed, with the exception of the magazine.

The magazine is an attachment which enables the soldier to hold in reserve a number of cartridges which can be fired when occasion requires with the loss of the least possible time in reloading. It consists of a sheet-steel box containing a platform which is pushed up by a spring. When the cartridges (ten in number) are pushed into this box, the platform is pressed down and the cartridges are kept in place by a shutter moving in the side of the body, called the 'cut-off.' When it is required to use magazine fire, the cut-off is pulled out and the platform presses a cartridge up into the breech as soon as the bolt is drawn back, and replaces another as soon as the empty case is ejected, so that the soldier has only to open and close the breech to reload his rifle without putting his hand into his pouch for each cartridge. If he does not require to fire from the

magazine he can close the cut-off and load and fire in the ordinary way, one at a time.

We now come to the woodwork, which is in two parts, and is made, for the most part, from Italian walnut on account of its special fitness for the purpose. The butt is shaped in a lathe from blocks of wood which are chucked in the lathe as oblong blocks, and are turned out by a very ingenious arrangement as rifle butts, only requiring to be sand-papered up and polished to be fitted to the rifle. The other part, or fore-end, is turned out and shaped in the same way, being cut with recesses to take the magazine, which passes through it into the body, the 'dial-sight' (for long distance firing), lower band, and nose-cap, and is drilled to receive a short clearing rod. The butt-plate is about the last item we need consider; this is a brass plate fitted to the end of the butt, and contains a hinged lid or trap which covers up a hole (bored up the butt) which receives the bolt used to screw the butt to the body, and also serves as a receptacle to contain a brass oil-bottle and 'pull-through,' these being an absolutely necessary part of the outfit of the rifle, as with 'cordite' ammunition rusting sets up so quickly after firing that it is necessary to clean out the barrel as soon as possible.

After all the components are finished they are taken into the 'viewer's' department. In this shop each piece is carefully examined, and if free from faults is handed over to the 'assembler.' He puts the whole weapon together; the butt is then stamped with the date, &c., of manufacture, and the rifle is complete.

In connection with the rifle, the bayonet must next be considered—in fact it is a part of it; and, as so much depends at times upon cold steel, it becomes a necessity that the material used should be of the best and of the finest temper. After the Egyptian campaign an outcry was raised about 'corkscrew bayonets and leaden swords;' but 'Tommy Atkins' has now no need to fear that the bayonet or sword he carries will fail him at a critical moment, for the test that the blades undergo is of the most extreme character. Taking the bayonets first, the blades are forged from the finest steel, and after being hardened and tempered are taken to the testing machine, which

is a curved block with a hole at one end, and is covered with a wire guard to protect the workman. The point of the blade is placed in the hole and the blade is bent to the curvature of the block, and to pass the viewer must spring back perfectly straight. I may say that very few fail to pass the test; those that do not, in most cases, breaking short off in preference to bending. After testing, the blades are ground up and polished, fitted with hilts and scabbards, and find their way to the store, to be issued with the rifle as a part of it. The swords issued undergo an even more severe test than the bayonets, as, after hardening, they are ground to shape, fitted up with hilt, &c., and are taken in hand to be tested when they are virtually complete. The first part of the test is carried out as follows: The sword is placed with its point in a 'shoe,' which holds it upright, the plunger of a press is then brought down on the top of the pommel until it has pressed the blade down no less than five inches, thus causing it to bend out at the side to a corresponding amount. This might be considered a severe enough test, but that is only a part. The sword is next taken out of the press and is examined. If it has sprung up perfectly straight it is allowed to undergo the second part of the test. Standing in front of an immense round log of timber, the tester takes the sword and with his full strength strikes the flat of the blade across the log twice and the front or cutting edge once; if the blade stands this test it is considered proved, and is stamped with the proof-mark on the side first bent, and is then fitted to its scabbard.

This, then, is the way that our rifles are made, and their accuracy and finish are a proof that the British army is in possession of the finest in the world; and as regards our swords and bayonets, when the need to use them comes, our soldiers may feel that on the end of their rifles or in their hands they really carry a 'trusty' blade.

In conclusion, I may say that the R.S.A. Factory at Birmingham, with its two thousand machines, is only the smaller part of the manufacturing establishment, the bulk of the rifles being made at Enfield Lock; the Birmingham factory taking the repairs.

COLD STORAGE AND OUR FOOD SUPPLY.

By E. H. JACKSON.



ONE of the most remarkable trade developments of recent times, and one that has undoubtedly come to stay, revolutionising as it has the food supply of the whole world, is that of the preservation of perishable food products in cold stores by mechanical means.

The utilisation of refrigerating processes for commercial purposes has developed so wonderfully within the last few years as to suggest endless possibilities. What our ancestors deemed impossibilities have become to us matters of every-day simplicity, and articles of food which they regarded as luxuries, only to be obtained at certain seasons of the year, are now, owing to

these refrigerating processes, almost every-day articles of diet.

Twenty years ago the science of refrigeration was in the most embryo state, and its possibilities not even dreamt of. The pioneers, who in 1880 despatched (after numerous mishaps) the first consignment of 400 frozen sheep from Australia, little thought their venture would attain to such proportions or prove of such value to the sheep-breeders of the colonies.

In 1880, 400 carcasses were imported into this country; in 1881, 17,275. In 1882 New Zealand started with 8800; and then in 1883 Argentina shipped 17,000; while in 1897 the totals respectively amounted to the enormous figures—Australia, 1,394,500; New Zealand, 2,696,000; Argentina, 2,068,000; or a combined total of over six millions.

Nor is this all—to these must be added the 758,000 cwt. of frozen beef received.

At first frozen meat was looked upon with suspicion. People could not be persuaded that it was, to say the least, palatable; but cheapness and improved quality in course of time made many converts, though in some parts of England and Scotland the prejudice partly remains, but it is slowly and surely dying away.

It is calculated that we are dependent on the outside world for 36 per cent. of our beef, mutton, and pork; for of the 123 lb. consumed per head last year in this country, 79 lb. (say 64½ per cent.) were of home production and 44 lb. (say 35½ per cent.) imported.

It is needless to say that although frozen beef and mutton form the chief staple of the cold storage business, they do not form by any means the whole of food products that are, by means of refrigeration, rendered available for the consumption of the teeming millions of our population. The supply of home-grown meat, poultry, game, fruit, &c., is very disproportionate to the ever-increasing demand, so it has to be supplemented by thousands of tons of food from abroad.

Three years ago rabbits, that fearful pest to the Australian sheep-grower, were first shipped in a frozen state to this country; and the rapid growth of this branch of the business is very noteworthy. For the first nine months of each of the last three years we have received from Australasia 18,000 cwt. in 1895, 52,600 in 1896, and 131,280 cwt. in 1897; so that last year's imports amounted to more than seven times those of 1895. In all we received in 1897 over 10,000 tons, equivalent to 400,000 Australian sheep. This year's imports are expected to be on a still larger scale.

Frozen salmon from the rivers of British Columbia, splendid fish weighing from 15 to 45 lb., are now steadily entering into competition with the fresh salmon caught in the English, Scotch, and Irish waters; while lately a special consignment of New Zealand trout arrived in splendid condition.

Turkeys from Canada arrive for our Christmas dinner by the thousand; while frozen fowls from Russia, geese from France and Italy, fresh eggs, six months old, from Russia and the States arrive almost daily in vast numbers.

In the last year or two our Australian cousins have entered into competition with the Danish and Dutch farmers in supplying us with fresh butter. Nearly 200,000 cwt. arrived from our colonies last year, and the butter is of such excellent quality that the foreigner will have to look sharp after his trade or, despite the difference in freight, he will lose it.

Nor must we forget the thousands of barrels of apples from America (where they have been kept in cold stores for months) which arrive in Liverpool when our stock of apples is exhausted; milk from Norway, frozen solid; while hares, game, and various foods too numerous to mention, go to swell the list of good things the good fairy 'Refrigeration' enables us to obtain. We are not indebted to cold storage for frozen goods alone for increasing our food supply, but also for meat that has been chilled only; much that, without refrigeration, it would be impossible to deal with except in certain times of the year, now enters largely into our ports from America.

The fact that the supply of home-grown meat was inadequate induced the Americans to improve their herds. For many years the best of our cattle and sheep have been purchased for exportation to North and South America, where the rich pastures afford more extensive grazing than can be found in this country. Cattle-raising has become a great industry, and now the descendants of our own pedigree animals are returned to us as food for the people.

Large numbers of live cattle are imported into England every year, and killed at Deptford and Birkenhead, the ports of debarkation; but one important factor which operates somewhat adversely against the importation of live cattle is that of health. Animals penned up in close confinement on a boat for a week or longer fall off in condition; and, as they more or less suffer from seasickness during the voyage, it is not surprising to find that their flesh deteriorates in quality. This fact was not lost upon the American shipper, and some few years ago a scheme was devised whereby chilled beef could be sent across the Atlantic in a condition which would enable it to compete successfully for popular favour with the prime cuts of animals bred and fed at home.

The scheme gradually succeeded, until at the present time a very large proportion of the foreign beef consumed in this country comes to us in a chilled state. The refrigerating chambers on board ship, kept at a temperature slightly above freezing-point preserves the meat in a chilled condition, so that it is perfectly sound and wholesome when placed upon the British markets.

The principal firms engaged in the chilled-meat trade are located in Chicago, where they have extensive works and the most elaborate plant and appliances for carrying on the business. The animals are selected, killed, and the beef conveyed in refrigerated vans by special trains to New York and Boston, where it is transferred to some of the best and fastest liners afloat. These vessels are provided with exceptional facilities for carrying the meat. In less than a fortnight from the day the animals are killed the beef is offered for sale in the English markets. It suffers no deterioration during the voyage, and keeping it in the chilled state has the effect of making it tender and improving the flavour and quality. Between 20,000 and 30,000 quarters of chilled beef are now sold in England every week.

During the last two years the supply of English pork, owing to the prevalence of swine fever, has become somewhat limited; and, in order to meet the existing demand, the American shippers have added to their beef exports consignments of chilled pork.

So important has the carrying of frozen and chilled produce become that there are now over 150 steamers fitted with special refrigerating machinery and cold rooms for dealing with the trade, and several others are now being fitted up. Ten years ago a boat bringing 30,000 carcasses was the largest, now several are being built to carry 100,000 carcasses per voyage.

We have thus far only treated of the exporting and despatching side of the question. We will now take that of the importer. With such vast quantities of perishable goods pouring into the country, it is imperative that cold stores should be erected at the ports to receive them on arrival. The imported products cannot be disposed of to advantage as quickly as the ships discharge; it is impossible to arrange supply and demand to a nicety, and the conditions vary. There are now stores in London capable of holding 1,250,000 of 56-lb. carcasses; there are stores in Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Glasgow, and other large

towns, with a capacity of about 980,000 carcasses; while in several smaller towns the municipalities are proposing to erect stores, or individual traders are setting about the business.

It is obvious that this almost miraculous power of preserving the perishable is of enormous advantage. It does more than merely retain in good condition stocks from abroad; it also retains any surplus stock of home-grown produce left by the variations in the tastes of the public and the vagaries of the weather. It enables dealers to buy with much more freedom than they could before the days of cold stores were known. Take the case of a butcher or poulterer as an example. A few years ago he was forced to purchase almost from hand to mouth. His stock must be fresh, as his means of warding off putridity were small. Consequently he was compelled to buy on a comparatively small scale, and to buy often. In a business community like ours no one needs to be told the effect of this system of trading. Buying small quantities, he had to pay a high price. When the stores were erected great possibilities were opened out to him. His fears of overstocking himself were diminished. If he did not sell quickly he knew the danger of loss was reduced to a minimum. Unsold goods he could leave at the stores, on payment of a reasonable sum, until such time as customers came along. This was satisfactory from the dealer's point of view. What was the effect upon the public? It having become possible to buy at a cheaper rate, competition quickly gave the consumer his share of the reduction. Prices fell, the purchasing power of money became greater, and the whole community benefited. The poor were able to get better bargains, the rich to add to their luxuries.

In fact, such is the benefit to be derived from the establishment of a cold store that it can safely be predicted that ere long there will not be a single town in the British Isles without its cold store for the accommodation of frozen meat, dairy produce, and other perishable but preservable food substances.

A PARTIAL BLOCKADE.

A REMINISCENCE OF THE HAYTIAN REBELLION.

By F. T. BULLEN.



THE condition of affairs in Cuba, and the position of that island before and during the struggle with Spain, when backed by the United States, has necessarily turned many people's thoughts, in the direction of Hayti. The two cases have sufficient similarity to warrant serious comparison and many dubious surmises as to the future of Cuba

when viewed in the light of Haytian history during the last twenty-five years. This may well be said even while recognising to the full the ability and fearless patriotism of many who have fought and toiled strenuously for their ideal of freedom both in Hayti and Cuba. Nor do these reflections for one moment imply that any idea of a continuance of present misrule in Cuba, however modified, is for one moment to be enter-

tained. The marvel is that seeing how utterly such tyranny failed to maintain its bad eminence in Hayti it has so long survived in the sister island. Of course there was this important difference between the two cases, that matters were complicated in Hayti by the presence of two sets of rulers, French and Spanish, who each claimed half of the island. Both were hated impartially by the revolutionists, who have a far larger proportion of pure negro blood among them than is the case in Cuba; and both were inclined to thwart one another's plans while apparently taking concerted action.

A striking object-lesson in the conduct of the Haytian war was to be seen in what, for want of a better term, was called 'the blockade.' (The last blockade lasted, nominally, from November 1888 to July 1889.) The combined fleets of France and Spain had the job in hand; but, although there had then been little done to settle the question of an 'effective' blockade, their proceedings were an utter farce. To the ordinary commerce of the island it made no difference at all. Trading vessels came and went as they chose without any hindrance to their operations except in the natural shrinkage of trade, which of course was great. So much was this the case that when, on her way home, our large steamship left Kingston in Jamaica for Port-au-Prince, there was no excitement or apprehension among the large number of passengers we carried, not even a suggestion of danger or detention. As we drew near the apex of the gradually narrowing gulf whose shores converge upon Port-au-Prince two warships became visible, one on either side of the harbour's mouth, but some three miles seaward of it. Although apparently at anchor, they both had steam up and flew their national colours in storm-flags, one French, the other Spanish. To our usual 'sea-courtesy' of dipping our ensign as we passed between them they vouchsafed no notice. Doubtless they did not feel too amiably disposed towards any vessel flying the well-known red ensign, but they made no overt show of unfriendliness beyond this sulky unresponsiveness.

At first the harbour seemed entirely deserted; but when we reached the hulk in which our cargo was stored pending our arrival we discovered lying alongside the mole a long, low steamer of some 700 or 800 tons register, whose two schooner masts raked aft, with the short funnel, at a preposterous angle, giving her a most slayer-like appearance. She was painted a gray-blue—masts, funnel, boats, houses, and hull—so that she was difficult to descry at any distance. Her appearance would have drawn a seaman's attention anywhere, here it did not need the tiny 'stars and stripes' fluttering over her tailrail to inform us that, whatever her ostensible name and port of registry might be, 'Yankee filibuster and blockade runner' was writ large all over her. She had evidently accomplished

her inward errand, whatever it had been, and was now placidly lying without a sign of life about her except the tiny blue vapour hovering over the funnel that spelt 'banked fires.'

Ashore the condition of the forlorn and dilapidated town afforded ample interest. Once it had evidently been a quite important city for this part of the world. But now, after subjection to years of maltreatment at the hands of its former as well as its present masters, it was but a succession of ruinous heaps, unfit for decent habitation; and the state of anarchy masquerading in the guise of a government gave the final touch of hopelessness to the place from our point of view. The negro was 'on top' and meant to stay there. Also he had made up his mind that here, if nowhere else in the world, the white man should recognise the fact or pay an exceedingly heavy price for continuacy. Gorgeously-attired darkies fantastically armed and barbarously bedizened with tarnished gold lace and draggled ostrich plumes strutted about the filthy footways, demanding instant and servile recognition from all white men unfortunate enough to meet them; and, as the number of officials was great and the reins of power constantly shifting, it was well-nigh impossible to avoid the grave crime of neglecting to salute adequately and promptly some feather-brained negro dressed in a little brief authority. Most of those white men who for their sins were compelled to do business in this abominable place found it safest to compromise by saluting impartially all the gentlemen of colour they met, feeling fairly sure that the swift kaleidoscope of Haytian politics would bring every nigger on top sooner or later, even if for only a few hours.

To this wretched condition of things we owed the loss of thirty good men's lives. A party of men from our ship went ashore one evening; and in the course of their walk were met by some cock-a-hoop official of whom they took no notice. His scarecrow escort at once demanded abject apologies, which were not forthcoming, although some sea-ribaldry on the subject of niggers collectively was freely tendered. In the subsequent scrimmage our fellows were badly mauled and hauled off to the calabozo, an unspeakably filthy collection of huts islanded in a lake of sewage. Twenty-four hours in this inferno sufficed to reduce men accustomed only to the briny purity of sea-air to such helplessness that when their heavy fines were paid they could barely crawl over the ship's side to get aboard. Every man of them was at once placed on the sick list, the doctor's face lengthening considerably upon his examination of them. Fortunately we had a shipwrecked crew with us as passengers, who were only too glad of a chance of employment, so that we were not shorthanded; and the cargo was completed without delay.

At about ten P.M. on the last evening a canoe

arrived from heaven knows where, bearing a bulky negro, well-dressed and important-looking, who was evidently an intending passenger. After a hurried interview with the captain and chief officer, two or three hands were called to hoist his baggage on board, which they did with many cursory remarks as to its abundance both of weight and quantity. The canoe disappeared into the darkness, the packages were taken into the saloon, and, with the exception of perhaps half-a-dozen people, no one on board knew anything of the occurrence. As for the new passenger, he became invisible; even the stewards saw scarcely anything of him on the voyage. And nobody seemed curious.

At earliest dawn next morning every member of the crew, when called to get under weigh, noticed almost instantly that the small blue vapour that continually overhung the filibuster's funnel was growing darker and denser. From our own the black masses were rolling in piteous volumes as the firemen worked with a will, eager to get away. When the word was passed to 'stand by' for hauling in moorings from the hulk, every one, except perhaps two or three, was amazed to see the Yankee suddenly glide from her station and noiselessly sneak alongside of us. Excitement was immediately at boiling-point, and many an eye sought our 'old man's' impassive face, as with arms folded he leaned against the after-rail of the bridge. There was perfect silence on board as the tall, elegant figure of the Yankee commander, in a perfectly-fitting suit of gray silk, and with his handsome oval face shaded by an enormous Panama sombrero, calmly stepped from his bridge on to our deck, where he was instantly joined by our skipper. The pair dived into the chart-room, emerging five minutes later and seeking their respective bridges at once. Our engine-room gong gave out its deep note, succeeded instantly by the command 'Let go, fore and aft,' and the low mellow notes of the sailors' cries as they hauled in the big, stubborn hawsers. We forged ahead slowly, so did our companion, but apparently without effort on his part. Soon we were going full speed for the sea in mid-channel, with our biggest 'house-flag' and ensign flying and every beam and stringer vibrating like a jew's harp tongue under the unusual stress. The Yankee still kept position in the same effortless fashion. Her captain lolled negligently on the bridge, dreamily puffing at a corpulent cigar, his half-closed eyes apparently indicating utter indifference. Not another individual was to be seen on her deck. Our rail on the contrary was crowded with spectators, crew and passengers alike, all with nerves at concert-pitch as we rushed along towards that spot in mid-channel where we should be directly between the two watchers of the threshold. Up till now they had made no sign that they knew of anything going on of interest

to them, unless a slight thickening of the smoke wreath from their funnels meant that they were accumulating steam for a dash. They did not move, however, and gradually we drew abreast of them. No sooner had we passed them than our Yankee friend deliberately drew himself up and said curtly 'G'lang ahead,' then, with a sweeping bow and wave of his hat, 'S'long, Cap., my best thanks. S'long ladies n' all.' As he spoke his vessel seemed to leap forward like an unleashed hound, while a very torrent of inky smoke from her funnel overspread the sky, and befouled the pure air with the reek of petroleum. The two war-ships started immediately in chase, and for some time a succession of fountains in the filibuster's direction as well as the hollow reverberation of guns told us they had hopes of crippling their audacious enemy even at that long range. But he steamed two knots to their one, and in less than a quarter of an hour they gave up the chase. There was considerable trepidation on board our vessel at this time. What more natural than that they should seek some small solace by punishing us who were undoubtedly aiders and abettors of the Yank's escape? Still, even at the sacrifice of a fine dramatic situation, the truth must be told, which is that they did not molest us in any way whatever.

Before nightfall the whole incident, exciting as it had been, was completely obliterated from every mind by the appalling news of a death from yellow fever. One of the victims of Port-au-Prince lay rigid, awaiting the speediest burial possible, and we could no longer ignore the frightful fact that this justly-dreaded plague was enthroned in our small community. Terrible at all times, there is something specially awful in being plague-stricken on board ship. Each looked at his fellow and pondered the problem so painfully demanding solution, 'You or me next?' Next day six of the crew lay moribund in the improvised tent-hospital rigged on the main-hatch. And then a sudden, terrific incident occurred. A big Liverpool Irishman, one of the bosun's mates, had been seized at breakfast-time, and after about an hour's restless writhing in the tent suddenly became furiously delirious. Mother naked, he burst out into the blazing sunshine and flew forward, snatching up the cook's broad axe as he passed the galley door. Nearly everybody was on deck at the time except those off watch; but after a series of miraculous escapes the poor maniac had the solitude of the deck to himself. He did much damage to the panelling of the deck-houses by furious blows of his weapon as he rushed about, and then suddenly caught sight of the quartermaster in the wheelhouse, who, unconscious of any trouble, was calmly steering. Two or three tremendous blows of the axe demolished the door but gave the badly-scared helmsman time to flee. In burst the madman, foaming, and all was instantly quiet. For some time none dared venture

near; while, the engines being stopped, the ship lay like a log upon the sea. At last it was discovered that the poor wretch in his blind fury had hurled himself across the box behind the wheel, and had fallen upon the other side with the edge of his weapon beneath him, inflicting a wound in his chest and throat wide enough to have let out several lives had he possessed them. That evening there were four burials at one reading of the service, and as each solemn plunge resounded alongside it found a painful echo in every heart. For now the destroyer was busy fore and aft. The doctor, cheeriest of Irishmen, worked himself ruthlessly, never seeming to take any rest, and striving with amazing courage to infuse some of his own dauntless spirit into his agonised patients. Yet, in spite of all he could do, for one awful week the number of the sufferers increased daily, although, owing to the dire swiftness of the plague, the dead continually made room for the dying. Then the boilers began to leak, and for an apparently interminable twenty-four hours we lay motionless, while, with that sublime heroism that, while it is so often manifested by marine engineers is so little accounted of, the engine-room staff toiled unceasingly in scorching corners amidst scalding showers to patch up the source of our motive-power.

Not until thirty of our number had gone from among us did the fury of the scourge abate, leaving ten poor haggard wrecks of manhood battling feebly for life, buoyed by the hope of soon coming within range of our own maligned climate, which with all its faults will never tolerate a germ of yellow fever in its uncertain atmosphere. And then the deep blue of the ocean gave place to the well-known dull green of soundings, beloved by the homeward-bound sailor. In a few hours we sighted the Fastnet, that lonely outpost of Britain that has so often gladdened the eyes of the homesick wanderer, but never, surely, was more welcome than to us. While we were still feasting our eyes upon it the unfamiliar form of our negro passenger appeared on deck. After a little anxious search he button-holed the captain, who took him to his state-room. Thence in a short time came sounds of woe in a strange voice. A sharp summons from the captain brought the chief officer hurriedly to join in the conference, but he did not bring peace with him. On the contrary, the angry conversation increased to a perfect uproar, in the midst of which 'robbers,' 'my dollars, my money: where is it?' and so on, were occasionally heard. At last the affair culminated in the distraught darkey being man-handled by several stewards and seamen, who conveyed him in a very tempest of rage to the forepart of the ship and fastened him securely in an empty berth. From that time we neither saw nor heard any more of him until he was bundled ignominiously overside on to the quay at Liverpool.

What had transpired no one seemed to know definitely until some days after, when the negro's version of the story was made public. Then it appeared that he had been Lord High Treasurer, or whatever high-falutin title these fantastic black men bestowed upon their head money-keeper. He had conceived the brilliant idea of levanting, treasury and all, and, what is more, succeeded in carrying it out. Arriving on board our vessel, he was seized with fear lest he should be robbed, and so confided his loot to the care of our two senior officers. They evidently saw through the matter at a glance, but said no word until, coming up Channel, the ex-treasurer blandly desired his money again. He was met by a polite stare of wonder and a grave inquiry as to whatever he could mean. This reception nearly upset his reason, and he raved almost incoherently. Eventually he was, as we saw, ejected from the cabin and confined until the ship's arrival. Then the first use he made of his liberty was to set the law in motion; but, utterly discredited as he was by his compatriots, and without witnesses, he failed completely. What became of him I never heard; and it was not of course the business of the passengers—too glad as they all were to escape from a ship that had for them such unpleasant memories—to inquire precisely what was done with the money or whether it was restored to some equally public-spirited successor to the late Lord High Treasurer of Hayti.

A WISH.

Would I were a tiny flower
Growing in my lady's bower,
That I might throughout the day
Watch her while at work and play;
Hear her, as she moves along,
Humming low some favourite song.
This were life, since life to me
Lies wherever she may be.

If she pluck me, what care I
If at her fair hands I die,
Since that soothing, soft caress
Robs death of its bitterness.
And, when dying, this I know
That those dainty lips bestow
On my form one lingering kiss.
What more pleasant death than this?

But if not the scented rose,
Then the vilest weed that grows
On the pathway, where she treads
As she tends the flower-decked beds.
For thrice happy would I be,
Even if she trod on me;
Since what death were half so sweet
As to die at her fair feet?

IAN SINCLAIR.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



PROMOTION IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

By DUNCAN CUMMING.

ENORMOUSLY rich in potentialities, the United States is, of all Powers, the poorest in its equipment for prompt action with an army in case of the emergency of war. This fact has been abundantly illustrated by the meagreness of the results obtained by the American troops in the Cuban campaign, after weeks of preliminary work in enrolling, organising, and equipping vast bodies of troops throughout the country, with an accompanying effusion of money and patriotism which has scarcely a parallel in modern history. And it must be remembered, too, that by far the greater part of the men who fought the Spaniards so bravely around the heights of Santiago consisted of trained and experienced regular soldiers.

Very different, in quality and amount, has been the work effected by the American navy in the present crisis. The navy is, and — except at moments when the western 'hayseed' element preponderated in Congress—always has been, the special pet of both government and nation. There is now little foundation for the belief—a belief which was at the root of the Spanish contempt of the American navy at the beginning of this war—that American crews are a decidedly mixed lot as to nationality—that American sailors, in fact, are made up principally of Norwegians, Germans, Kanakas, Italians, with a sprinkling of Japanese, and the Americans indifferently represented. Nowadays the majority of the sailors of the American navy are citizens. Even so far back as 1894, of the enlisted force of the navy, fifty per cent. were native-born Americans, seventy per cent. were American citizens, and over ninety per cent. were residents of the United States; while of the thirty per cent. of aliens, more than one-third had declared their intention of becoming citizens.

And not only does the United States navy stand much better in this important respect to-day, but there never was a time when places in it below the rank of commissioned officer were so attractive to native Americans. Several reasons might be given for this. One is, that the monthly wages of a large number of sailors in certain grades has been greatly increased in recent years, thus bringing the navy pay-list into favourable comparison with that of outside labour. But the chief reason for the great change that has taken place in the conditions of navy life during recent years lies in the hardly observed fact that, as the old wooden ships and the old-fashioned steam-propelled ships have given place to modern marine machines, the navy has become more and more suited to the taste of capable Americans.

This gradual change in the navy has wrought a marked change in the *personnel* of the petty officers and the enlisted men, as well as in the conditions under which they work. It may almost be said of the American as of other navies, that there are no more sailors. The only sailing-ships that ever move from place to place now are the school-ships and training-ships. True, the American navy still ships boys and seamen at wages ranging from nine to twenty-four dollars a month, to whom bounties of three months' pay are granted upon re-enlistment, and it is no uncommon thing to see an enlisted man paid off at the expiration of his three years' term of service with several hundred dollars to his credit. The regular blue-jackets of the United States navy are a decidedly well-paid, well-fed class, altogether much better off than their brethren of the merchant marine.

But now, besides seamen proper, the navy also ships a host of machinists, mechanics, boiler-makers, firemen, and what not, at wages sometimes exceeding seventy dollars (£14) per month, besides board

and lodging, afloat or ashore. The new navy, as it grows, will need an ever-increasing number of men in these special classes—the classes that contain the pith of American ingenuity and skilled labour. There are now many new ships building—five battleships among them, while there are three others for which bids are soon to be solicited—and every new iron or steel steam-propelled monster that is added to the navy creates an increased demand for the skilled and high-paid classes of enlisted men. Already there are hundreds of machinists at seventy dollars (£14) per month, boilermakers at sixty (£12), blacksmiths at fifty (£10), plumbers at forty-five (£9); water-tenders, oilers, firemen, and painters at from thirty to forty dollars per month (£6 to £8); to say nothing of coppersmiths, shipwrights, and coal-passers at wages varying from fifty dollars (£10) per month down to twenty-two dollars (£4, 10s.).

Even the seaman class, the worst paid of all in its lower branches, is very well paid in the higher ranks. The lad that enters as a third-class apprentice, at nine dollars per month, may reasonably hope to become chief master-at-arms at sixty-five dollars per month (£13); or, better still, he may attain to the coveted rank of warrant-officer, with pay and privileges the same as those of the lieutenant grades—namely, from twelve hundred dollars (£240) to nineteen hundred dollars (£380) a year, exclusive of board and lodging.

Let us glance for a moment now at the interesting class of naval apprentices—the carefully trained boys upon whom Uncle Sam founds his hopes of ultimately manning his ships exclusively with native American sailors of intelligence, experience, and sterling patriotism. If a boy decides to enter the American navy, there are two ways of setting about it. He can go either as an officer or as a common sailor; but in the latter case he must remember that, though he may rise to the honourable and well-paid grade of warrant-officer, he can never hope to tread the quarter-deck as a commissioned officer.

It may be interesting first, by way of comparison, to take a few facts and figures from the British navy, the only other navy worth consideration on the score of pay and promotion. Boys are taken into the British navy between the ages of fifteen and sixteen and a half years, and by diligence and good conduct can rise, as in the American service, to the rank of warrant-officer. They must make an engagement to serve for ten years on attaining the age of eighteen, and after that age they are rated as ordinary seamen of the second class, and ordinary seamen and able seamen as soon as they are qualified. When a boy enters the service he receives gratuities of £5 for outfit and £1 for bedding, and on being rated a first-class boy he receives a further sum of £2, 10s. for clothing purposes.

The scale of pay, besides a liberal supply of provisions, is as follows: Boys receive from £9 to £10, 12s. a year; ordinary seamen from £18 to £23, able seamen from £29 to £32, petty officers from £35 to £58, and warrant-officers from £100 to £164 a year. Men are allowed pensions after twenty years' service, or when disabled, of from £18 to £52 per annum; and those who remain in the service after twenty years can obtain larger pensions. Warrant-officers receive pensions rising to £150 a year, and pensions are granted to their widows. To sum up, then, any ordinary boy who joins the English navy has it within the possibilities of his career to become one day a warrant-officer, and to retire with a pension of £150 when he is not necessarily more than forty years of age.

Turn we now to Uncle Sam's side of the account. Boys of good character, who have no physical defect, and who can read and write fairly well, are admitted into the American navy between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years. They must serve till the age of twenty-one as boys or junior seamen, and after that age they rank as seamen or petty officers. They are allowed a sum of forty-five dollars (£9) for outfit. To discover the exact number of petty officers on board a fully-equipped ship is a puzzling affair; but, at all events, the number of these minor prizes is encouragingly large; while still higher up, as the final goal of the common sailor's aspirations, are the four warrant-officerships—held by the boatswain, the carpenter, the gunner, and the sailmaker—whose pay and privileges, as stated above, are the same as those of the junior officers.

The pay of boys enlisted as third-class apprentices is nine dollars (about £1, 18s.) a month; the next promotion to second-class brings ten dollars (£2); the next, to first-class apprentices, eleven dollars (£2, 4s.) a month. Farther up the scale we find second-class seamen apprentices, with nineteen dollars (£3, 16s.), followed by first-class seamen apprentices, with twenty-four dollars (£4, 16s.) a month. The latter two grades correspond respectively to ordinary seaman and able seaman, or simply seaman, whose pay is also nineteen and twenty-four dollars a month. From a comparison of these figures we can see that a first-class seaman apprentice, or a seaman, receives two hundred and eighty-eight dollars (£57, 12s.) a year, a sum which is one hundred and twenty-eight dollars (£25, 12s.) in excess of the highest paid to a first-class seaman in the British service. Even a third-class apprentice in the American service receives more pay than an English naval cadet; a second-class seaman apprentice receives more than an English midshipman; while an American lieutenant or boatswain receives in pay a sum far in excess of an English lieutenant's pay, even with all the occasional extra money allowances thrown in. An English lieutenant's highest

pay is about £185 a year; the pay of an American lieutenant or warrant-officer ranges from twelve hundred dollars to nineteen hundred dollars a year (£240 to £380). This, then, is the income to which a poor boy may reasonably look forward to attaining in the American service; and at the age of sixty-two years he can retire with a pension of three-fourths of his current pay, just the same as a commissioned officer. That is, he can carry with him on his retirement a perpetual order on the Treasury for a sum of from nine hundred to fourteen hundred and twenty-five dollars a year (£180 to £285), the lower figure of which considerably exceeds the £150 which is the utmost limit of the British warrant-officer's pension. The latter, however, has one great advantage, and one which tends to the good of the British service by hastening promotion—namely, that he can carry away his substantial pension of £150 when he is not more than forty years of age. Even if the American seaman does not attain to warrant rank, there is still the middle grade of the petty officer, whose name is legion in the American navy, and who receives from twenty-seven to seventy dollars (£5, 8s. to £14) a month, and can retire with a pension after thirty years' service. Even the lad with a gift for music may easily get himself transferred to the special class that includes musicians, writers, and apothecaries, and here the wages vary from eighteen to sixty dollars (£3, 12s. to £12) a month.

There is a special provision of law to encourage good men to remain long in the service. The ordinary term of enlistment is three years, and by this provision any honourably-discharged man who re-enlists within three months from the date of his discharge returns to the navy with one dollar per month additional good conduct pay. The extra dollar is added at each re-enlistment, and there may easily be half-a-dozen re-enlistments, or, for that matter, a dozen. It means that a good man who sticks to the service for life gets a three months' vacation with full pay every three years, followed by an increase of pay.

It usually happens that the man who thus enlists and re-enlists has reached the grade of petty officer at his third or fourth enlistment, and after that the larger pay of his new rank increases regularly a dollar per month every three years, should he choose to remain in the service. And if physically disabled, a man, after ten years' service, is entitled to a pension of eight dollars (£1, 16s.) a month, and after twenty years' service to half his pay. In addition to these privileges, frequent short furloughs of from three to six days are granted to enable boys and men to visit distant relatives, and always on full pay. A boy has almost unlimited daily liberty, and while in port, if his home is near, he can stay

there from Saturday to Monday if he is not in debt.

Reverting again to the skilled workers in the United States navy to-day, the mass of them receive in the long-run better pay than the average wage-workers on shore, without counting the added advantages of subsistence, credit for service, pension, &c. It is true that mechanics in the navy receive nominally smaller wages than men of their trades ashore, but then they are subject to none of the uncertainties of business or weather, or the stoppages caused by sickness. The navy 'goes right on' in times of panic, and there is no docking for illness. Employment and pay are secure for the rest of a man's days, and promotion is almost within his own control. Nearly every walk in life in America has ex-members of the navy in its ranks, for it has been found by hundreds who have been plucky enough to try it that a cruise will do much to educate and develop a bright young fellow who wants to get a few hundred dollars ahead, with a little experience of life thrown in.

The aristocratic organisation of the United States navy has doubtless hitherto kept many self-respecting native Americans from enlisting, but the service is vastly more democratic in practice than in theory. In this respect it offers a refreshing contrast to the army. Anything more pleasing than the harmonious blending of the strictest discipline with the heartiest camaraderie, so characteristic of the relations between officers and men on board a well-regulated American warship, is not to be found in any other department of life. True, no enlisted man may hope to become a commissioned officer; but the enlisted man of tried ability and known good conduct always earns the respect and consideration of his superiors. The brutal officer of the deck is almost unknown in the United States navy, and the self-respecting enlisted man is rarely made to feel that any one looks down upon him. And the seaman whose own conduct does not entail his 'liberty' may see foreign parts as an enlisted man in a satisfactory and instructive fashion. There are hundreds of enlisted men in the navy of the United States who are as thoroughly trusted ashore as the most staid inmates of the ward-room. A man's repute in this regard is not left to mere chance, but is matter of careful record. The young man who makes up his mind to endure with patience a life of discipline and regularity invariably finds the American navy agreeable, interesting, and profitable.

Perhaps these few remarks, founded on a close examination of the subject at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, as well as on the ships and among the men themselves, may serve to explain to the interested reader the reasons for the popularity and efficiency of the United States navy.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VI.—FOREWARNED.



URING the years that John had known Hettie Beek they had never before passed an evening alone. Her father or Ruth or some other friend or relation had always, either intentionally or otherwise, prevented a *tête-à-tête*. How often he had craved for the chance that was at last given him of declaring his passion! The desire of his life had been to win Hettie's love. He had watched her in childhood playing among the piles of timber, and laughing at him roguishly between the chinks; and he had gradually realised as she grew to womanhood, and his love for her matured, that she could never be won unless he rose to be her equal in state and fortune. He had read that men had risen—risen from the lowest grade—to become the heads of great commercial enterprises; and he had sternly resolved to make himself indispensable to Beek & Son. He had reached that point at last—had passed it—was even within measurable distance of getting the ship-breaking business into his own hands. Fortune had been propitious, so far as he was concerned. Should he let the chance go by? It might never recur.

He had always had good reason to believe that Hettie was well disposed towards him; and although he had never dared to hope that he had more than roused her admiration, John sometimes imagined that he had occasionally caught her looking at him as though he had begun to win some favour in her eyes. He was weighing in his mind how to approach the subject, when a word from Hettie, without any preconceived motive, roused the impulse that he had held in check for so long a time.

'John,' said she as they sat over the fire on the night upon which Ruth was contemplating her flight to London, 'something has happened since our talk together—our talk about reconstructing the business. It has altered my views entirely. But tell me, have you seriously considered the manner of man you are dealing with in Lawyer Burtenshaw?'

'Yes; I know my man,' said John confidently, 'and I am ready to risk everything. Do you think Mr Burtenshaw can hoodwink me?'

'No; but, John,' persisted Hettie, 'when you spoke of retrieving the fortunes of the house with so much earnestness and generosity, it was for Ruth's sake—and mine; didn't you say so?'

'Yes, Hettie; for your sake.'

'But, John, let us suppose,' said Hettie, with

a business-like air—'let us suppose that Ruth and I—for reasons of a private nature—had resolved upon other plans. What should you decide to do then?'

'What should I do?' said John, perplexedly.

'Let us suppose,' resumed Hettie, 'that Ruth and I were averse to the scheme—so dead against it, John, that we had determined to go away and depend on our own exertions for an existence—would that really matter to you?'

'Matter? I wouldn't stop here a day,' said John. 'Lawyer Burtenshaw might step in and foreclose whenever he liked. What motive should I have left, Hettie, for rebuilding the fallen house?'

For a while they were silent. Hettie seemed to be pondering deeply. Presently she said: 'We've made up our minds, John, to face the world alone—Ruth and I. We shall have to live in a two-pair back, I suppose, and take in needlework or washing. Doesn't that seem a possible solution?'

'It's madness!'

'It is Ruth's wish,' said Hettie.

John went over to Hettie's chair and bent over her.

'Don't go, Hettie; don't go!'

The colour deepened in Hettie's cheek. But she uttered no word of protest. Her face showed signs of animation which emboldened John to persevere.

'I love you. You know it, Hettie,' he said. 'Stay, and help me. The work is begun. Help me to complete the task. Have I not shown you what can be done? I only need your encouraging word. A look from you has often put new life into me—yes, when I have had good reason to give up every effort in despair.'

His words expressed no absolute revelation. Hettie realised that he was devoted: she had realised it long before Ruth spoke—before she and Jarvis were thrown—by a mutual solicitude concerning the fate of the house—so frequently together. But she had never until to-day fully realised what it meant. There was something in his attitude towards her that seemed to approach nearest to her ideal. He was a man of energy and pluck who knew the worth of a woman's helpfulness. His constancy—his force of character and passion—drew her irresistibly towards him at this moment when the need of it was great indeed.

'You hardly know,' pursued Jarvis, 'what insults I have borne for your sake—borne them

silently. I have been taunted a score of times, when he suspected my love for you, by your brother Gabriel. He did his utmost to drive me out.'

'I never guessed,' said Hettie thoughtfully, 'that I was the cause of Gabriel's injustice towards you. How you must detest him!'

'No! All that will be forgotten,' said John, 'if I can win your love. Is it still your wish to go away?'

'Mine? It's Ruth's wish.'

'Not yours?'

'No—not now,' said Hettie.

She had scarcely spoken—Jarvis was still bending over her—when the parlour door opened, and Mr Burtenshaw stepped into the room. How it was that neither of them had heard his knock, or even his familiar footstep in the hall, was beyond their comprehension. Hettie rose and came forward to greet him with the sense of dread his presence had inspired ever since that night upon which her father died.

'I must apologise,' said the lawyer, with a glance at the clock upon the mantelpiece—'I must apologise, Miss Beek, for intruding upon you at so late an hour. But the matter is urgent.'

He sat down in front of the fire, folded his arms, and tucked his spider legs under the chair. Never had he looked more like a weaver of webs, thought Hettie, than he looked to-night.

'The matter,' said he, looking from Hettie to Jarvis, who sat on either side of him—'the matter concerns you both. It is, therefore, most lucky that I have found you together.'

He scarcely seemed to expect any reply, though he paused with his eye fixed on Jarvis. The manager returned his glance.

'Have you submitted to Miss Beek by any chance,' Mr Burtenshaw asked him, 'the substance of our talk this afternoon?'

'Yes. You might be sure I should do that.'

The lawyer nodded.

'And does'—and he now eyed Hettie keenly—'does Miss Beek approve?'

Hettie met his eye unflinchingly.

'Is it of any consequence,' said she, 'whether I approve or not?'

'Of any consequence?' and the lawyer appeared to be weighing the question carefully. 'No; I should say not.'

'In that case,' said Hettie, 'we'll not discuss the matter. Still, if you should wish to know my views at any time, sir, Mr Jarvis can enlighten you.'

'Ah!'

And Mr Burtenshaw again looked from Hettie to Jarvis. Again there was a pause.

'The matter about which I have come to speak,' the lawyer resumed, 'has reference to this very affair. For since you broached it to me, John, something of moment has occurred. It may alter

my plans. When I reached the inn at Willoughby Junction, on my way home, I found my clerk waiting for me. He handed me a telegram. Read it.'

Jarvis took it from the lawyer and read aloud: '*On his track.—RUSHBROOK.*'

'What do you make of it?' said Mr Burtenshaw, scrutinising John's face keenly.

John shrugged his shoulders.

'Nothing? Then I shall surprise you,' Mr Burtenshaw resumed. 'It refers to that scoundrel—I beg your pardon, Miss Beek—I mean that fellow Gabriel.'

'My brother?'

Mr Burtenshaw nodded. 'Rushbrook's the detective.' And he put the telegram into his pocket.

'Now, I'll tell you,' he pursued, after a moment's pause—'I'll tell you what I've come about. If Gabriel Beek returns—if he ever ventures to cross this threshold—I'll not spare him. He has called me a spider at the "Red Lion" inn at Alford a dozen times. He shall have cause.'

The lawyer spoke in a tone of suppressed passion. His look was harsh and resolute, and as he concluded he struck his knee with his clenched hand. Then he rose and took leave of the girl with all the plausibility of a trained courtier. John would have lingered, for he craved to have a word more with Hettie. But the look she gave him—a look of appeal which he could not fail to understand—made it impossible for him to stay a moment behind the lawyer. He went out, therefore, with Mr Burtenshaw's eyes never for an instant removed from his face.

'Now, John,' said the lawyer, taking him by the arm as soon as they were outside Beek and Son's premises, 'I must have one more word with you. Shall we take a turn upon the shore? I'm stifled. One can breathe, and speak more freely too, down there.'

A few steps brought them over the 'pull-over,' where the fishing-boats were hauled into the High Street in rough weather, down on to smooth, hard sand that had been recently washed by the tide. They walked in the direction of Captain Tudway's hulk, towards a wooden breakwater that stretched like the backbone of a whale across the beach at right angles, with its head buried in the dunes.

Between them and this breakwater there was a perfect desert of sand, still damp and glittering from the late ebb; and the white-crested waves were pitching languidly over it on a recurring tide. But there was no sign of languidness among the black, ragged clouds overhead. Swift and shapeless, like the winged demons of a coming storm, they swept beneath the moon, and flung their shadows ominously upon sea and sand.

Mr Burtenshaw, clinging more closely to his companion's arm, was the first to speak. 'I congratulate you,' said he. 'John, you've done a good stroke of business. No need to tell me your secret now. Best felicitations, my friend. She's a woman in a thousand.'

The familiar tone in which he spoke, while nudging Jarvis expressively in the side, brought a resentful flash into John's eyes. An angry word rose to his lips; but the training that he had had in self-restraint for years past now came to his aid. He knit his brows, and watched the angry clouds that were driving in from the sea.

'You're not content with the thought of making your fortune,' pursued the lawyer; 'you've set your heart on marrying that girl. Not bad, John; not bad. We shall work together famously.'

Again the lawyer pressed John's arm. It felt to him as though he were being drawn into his clutches; it was so unlike the pressure of friendship. Still, John could not but admit to himself that, if Mr Burtenshaw was playing a game—as he undoubtedly appeared to be—he had himself thrown down the first card this afternoon.

As though he had half-surmised John's thought, the lawyer went on: 'You wouldn't like to see that fellow Gabriel here again, and at the helm, would you?'

'Not I.'

'You know what would happen?'

'To me? Yes; I should be probably thrown overboard.'

'Head-foremost,' said the lawyer, 'if he knew how.'

They began to retrace their steps. The wild appearance of the night became more evident. A storm was close upon them. The first strong gust of wind struck them in the face as they turned.

'I may count upon you?' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'If that fellow's shadow ever falls within the timber-yard, John, you'll instantly inform me. Don't lose one second. As you value your own happiness, be swift and sure.'

The clouds grew blacker, and the wind swept down upon them with a rush. They quickened their pace, but it was not until they stood within the shelter of the 'Bacchus' archway that the lawyer released John's arm.

When Jarvis stepped into the timber-yard, after taking leave of Mr Burtenshaw, he still thought to find Hettie in the little parlour. He had confessed his love; but before it had been possible for Hettie to answer him—before she had been given time to decide his fate—the lawyer had walked in. Upon what a slight thread hangs the destiny of most men! As Jarvis crossed the yard the lights in the parlour were put out. How complete the darkness at that moment

seemed to him! A sense of superstitious dread crept over him as he turned despairingly and groped his way up the warehouse stairs to his old room among the beams and rafters.

Next day the discovery of Ruth's flight created a perceptible change in Hettie's attitude towards John. She appeared to avoid him. He marvelled that he saw nothing of her, except when the vexatious affairs of the house brought them together. Time went by, and John began to wish that Ruth would return, if only in order to restore Hettie to her natural self. One evening, when John walked into the parlour towards the supper hour, he was surprised to see Ruth lying on the sofa, just as though she had never been from home.

'Why, Ruth,' said he, stepping quickly forward and holding out his hand, 'is it indeed you?'

She looked up, blushing and trembling with delight at his kindly greeting. 'Oh John,' she said, making no effort to release her hand, 'I am so glad to see you and—Hettie again. I—I was afraid I should not reach home in time. I am so very thankful that I have.'

She seemed so agitated, though her eyes expressed intense happiness, that John hastened to ask, 'Is anything the matter?'

'I came expressly to warn you,' replied Ruth. 'I have seen Gabriel.'

Then she related every detail of the scene that had taken place in Mrs Clitherow's drawing-room in Nelson Square. 'You'll do your best to conciliate him, John, won't you?' she concluded. 'He seems so terribly in earnest.'

'So am I,' said John in a firm tone.

Ruth clenched her hands despairingly. 'You won't be warned,' said she. 'I thought it would be so.'

John placed his great hands gently on her shoulders. 'Dear Ruth,' said he, 'don't misunderstand—don't think me ungrateful for this concern you are showing about me. Indeed I am grateful. But don't ask me to conciliate your brother. I can never do that.'

'John! I'—

'No, no! He has opposed me, insulted me at every turn,' John interposed. 'But I've got the upper hand at last, and I mean to keep it, for Hettie's sake and yours, come what may.'

Still John pondered over Ruth's words, and her look and entreating tone were remembered long afterwards. She had come home in haste to warn him of a danger. John had not received so many tokens of kindly thought for his safety, or even for his well-being, that he could easily forget this incident. Besides, her warning had confirmed the admonition which Lawyer Burtenshaw had given him when they took that memorable walk upon the shore; and Jarvis began to look out almost hourly for the return of Gabriel Beek.

TRACES OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN PALESTINE.

FEW things strike the traveller more forcibly, on a first visit to the Holy Land, than the evidences which abound on every side that that wonderful little country has had a history of its own since Bible times.

We are very much accustomed to think of Palestine only, or chiefly, in connection with the Bible; perhaps to pore over maps in which the familiar Scripture names appear, marked with tolerable certainty. It is easy and natural that we should lose sight altogether of the eighteen centuries and a half which have rolled over the Holy Land, like every other land, since the latest New Testament times.

When St Paul visited Judæa for the last time, Jerusalem was still standing in all its glory, though the dark clouds of coming doom lowered heavily over it. Of course we do not expect to find it so to-day; but we are apt to forget how many strange vicissitudes it has passed through in the meantime.

When, however, the traveller lands at Jaffa, and begins the journey inland, and still more when he follows the rough tracks that serve for roads among the villages of the 'hill country,' it is brought home to his mind, with an almost disagreeable force of repetition, that the ages which have changed Ancient Britain into Modern England have likewise, as might have been expected, left their mark upon the Holy Land.

It is true that the East is 'unchanging' as compared with the West. In spite of the railway which now connects Jaffa with Jerusalem; in spite of modern hotels at both places, which have sprung up to meet the requirements of modern 'pilgrims' from Europe and America; in spite of tourist agencies and English and German schools and hospitals, and Latin convents and Russian hospices—many things go on in Palestine to-day as they did in the time of the apostles, and for that matter of the prophets, and even the patriarchs. You may still see the peasant following his light Eastern plough in the Plain of Sharon, clad in the striped flowing *abba* of his forefathers; and his team is quite likely to be a camel and an ass, 'unequally yoked together.' The shepherd still leads his flock to pasture, and often carries just such a sling as that with which David felled Goliath to the earth. Women still grind the corn for the 'daily bread' of their households, and carry water on their heads from the village well. In fact, countless habits and customs remain to throw light upon the language and narratives of the Bible.

Moreover, a great many places keep their old

Bible names, or have returned to them, by preference, for the Roman ones foisted upon them for a time. We have *Beit-lahm* (Bethlehem), *Er-Râm* (Ramah), and so on; to say nothing of those places which recall the names of characters famous in Scripture history, such as *Neby Samu'el* (Mizpah, associated with the 'prophet Samuel'), *El-'Azariyeh* (Bethany, the scene of the raising of Lazarus to life), and *El-Khulil* (Hebron, the burial-place of Abraham, 'the friend of God').

Then, as regards the inhabitants, there are, perhaps, as many Jews in Jerusalem now as there were in the time of Nehemiah; and there seems to be little room for doubt that the *fellahin* of the villages (nominally Mohammedans as a rule, but practically heathen) are not 'Arabs,' as they are popularly called, but direct descendants of the ancient Canaanites, who were never thoroughly exterminated or expelled by the Hebrew invaders.

Still, notwithstanding all such links with the remote past—the period which is covered by the Bible history—the traces of the nearer past are, perhaps, even more striking, because less expected. It is natural that the tide-marks of this long intervening period should appear; but the visitor is hardly prepared to meet with them in such profusion.

The old Land of Israel is, as it were, buried beneath layer after layer of mediæval ruins. In Jerusalem it is literally so; and the excavations, by which the Palestine Exploration Fund is seeking to identify many famous sites in and about the city, vividly represent the process of disinterment necessary if the actual Palestine of Bible times is to be recovered from beneath the rubbish-heaps and ruins—material, political and ecclesiastical—of the last eighteen centuries.

'I shall never think of it like this,' was the remark of an American visitor in the modern Garden of Gethsemane; and certain it is that the Palestine of to-day, with all its endless and amazing interest for the Christian student of the Bible, is, after all, in some respects, only the venerable mummy of the sacred Land of Israel, swathed from head to foot, as it were, in the grave-clothes of the bygone ages of the Christian era, though the day of awakening and restoration may be drawing near. On every hand are the traces not only of the more distant but of the nearer past.

Before the traveller is many miles inland from Jaffa, Ramleh makes its appearance. Its name simply means 'sandy' (it is on the Plain of Sharon); but our attention is drawn to its White Tower and its Mosque, which was once a church. Both

belong to the Christian epoch; and the latter is a relic of a Christianity now and for many ages past almost submerged beneath the dominant Mohammedanism. And as the modern pilgrim journeys on, and Jerusalem itself is reached, he is reminded of the fact, at least half-forgotten by many of us, that there have been two distinct periods of Christian ascendancy in Palestine: the first that of the Christian emperors; the second that of the Latin kingdom established by the Crusaders, of which Godfrey de Bouillon reverently refused to be crowned king.

Stand in front of the south door of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; at your feet is the last earthly resting-place of an Anglo-Norman knight, D'Aubigni (or Daubeny), a Crusader; but enter the church, and descend the long flight of steps near the north-east corner: here you find yourself in the ancient chapel of St Helena, the British mother of Constantine the Great. Yonder is the niche where, tradition says, she sat and watched, with credulous reverence, the digging (on a lower level still) which was believed to have led to the discovery (the 'invention,' to use the Latin term) of the true cross. This was early in the fourth century, some seven hundred years before the time of the Crusades.

Again, go 'even unto Bethlehem.' The noble Church of the Nativity—which, in all probability, marks the true site of the klan where our Redeemer was born—belongs, like the oldest part of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to the fourth century, when the veneration of the 'Holy Places' became a mark of devotion, after the example had been set by the Empress-Mother Helena. But on the ancient pillars may be found the rough autographs of the Crusaders; and when you leave the convent, and walk the streets of 'the city where David dwelt,' the fine-looking Bethlehemites whom you meet—every one of them professing Christians—are a living memorial of the sojourn of these Western knights of old, from whom they claim to be descended.

Now let us return to Jerusalem, and then wend our way along the valley of the Kedron, as it winds south-eastwards from the Holy City. Far down, in a lonely spot about mid-way between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, where the valley has deepened into a gorge, and the heat in summer is so insufferable that it may account for the name it bears (Wady-en-Nâr—'the valley of fire') here, among the gray hills of the Desert of Judæa, a strange pile of massive buildings clings to the cliff-side, and climbs hither and thither about the almost perpendicular rocks.

It is the Monastery of Mar Saba, no modern convent, but a venerable Greek Laura, which was already ancient in the days of Saladin and Cœur de Lion. In fact, this is the hermitage alluded to in Sir Walter Scott's *Talisman*. The rocky

cliffs around it have been honeycombed for centuries, as they are now, with hermits' caves; and it was here that 'St Stephen the *Sabaite*' wrote ages ago, in the original Greek, the hymn familiar to us—'Art thou weary?' The old Laura looks half a fortress; and, in fact, it has seen terrible deeds of violence in days gone by; as witness that heap of skulls, the relics of hermits martyred by the Persian king Khosru (Chosroes), in his invasion of Palestine during the later days of the Roman Empire.

We will return once more to Jerusalem, and follow from thence the wild, desolate road which, after passing Bethany, leads, by a succession of long descents, towards Jericho and the Jordan. We are almost exactly in the track of 'a certain man' of old who 'went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers;' it has happened to many since those days. But when we emerge at length into the Plain of Jordan, with its semi-tropical vegetation—the deepest depression, probably, on the surface of the earth—we find no 'city of palm-trees.' Here, indeed, at the entrance to Wady Kelt (possibly Brook Cherith), is the site of 'Herod's Jericho,' the city of Zacchæus, and of 'blind Bartimæus.' We have seen the remains of a mighty aqueduct which supplied its citizens' thirst in those days. And some distance to the north is a *tel*, or mound, marking the place where 'Joshua's Jericho' once stood. Close beside it is 'Elisha's spring.' But the wretched little village of *Eriha* (Jericho), which lies some way to the east of both the Bible sites, inherits nothing but the name, and seems to date only from the time of the Crusades. The city of Old Testament times has been followed into decay and demolition by the city of New Testament times; and, in the ages since, a new city has sprung up, and all but disappeared like its predecessors, while not a single palm-tree is to be seen.

And so elsewhere; for these are but a few instances. Far and wide among the hills of Palestine, beside or upon the ruins of Hebrew or Roman buildings, you will find crusading castles, now themselves in ruins, and Christian churches, either fallen into decay or utilised as Mohammedan mosques. The Mosque El Aksa, at the south end of the great temple area, was certainly built for Christian worship; while the 'Dome of the Rock,' popularly misnamed the 'Mosque of Omar,' may possibly have been both a heathen temple (when Jerusalem was *Ælia Capitolina*) and a Christian church, before it finally became a Mohammedan shrine.

Truly Palestine has a history in the nearer past which to most of us is all but a blank. As we wander half-bewildered among the relics of Old Testament and New Testament times, mingled with those of the Christian centuries when Mohammed was yet unborn, and relics of the later period, when the long struggle between

the Crescent and the Cross was being waged, now themselves obscured by later changes still, it dawns upon the mind with ever-increasing clearness that the present state of the land and the

people of Palestine is the outcome of centuries upon centuries of conflict and desolation, 'change and decay,' which have rolled over it since the days when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea.

THE GOLDEN BARS.

CHAPTER III.

Less than a week it was known pretty well in Shirley that Godfrey Harvey could not possibly hold on after Michaelmas. His mad ride to Wanborough on the morning of the birth of his child was now clearly understood. His lawyer, under stress of liabilities, which in the end had sent him fleeing from the country, had sold the Springfield mortgage deeds to Harvey's neighbour and worst enemy, Squire Stringer of the Grange. Every one knew what that meant. It was known to every one also that several writs and summonses were in the house; for the pock-marked man in brown who had served them had said as much in the kitchen of the 'Blue Boar.' 'Yes, gentlemen,' he had added, 'and there are more creditors waiting for a spring, you mark my words! Farmer Harvey's a done man—a done man, gentlemen.—Missis! another pint.'

So it was that good folk, as they passed by the old farmstead, gave it a long look as if they had never seen it before; or as if, now that misfortune had fallen upon it, its familiar features had taken a new aspect which wanted gazing at. Harvey would see them sometimes when he looked up from his writing-table—he was often seated there nowadays—and his lips would stiffen and his dark brows draw together at the pull of the moment's pain and bitterness. Then he would look down at his papers and books again to stare afresh at the inexorable figures which spelt ruin for him.

Oh, the curse of it! He had seen it stealthily coming, but, with the tail of his eye, as it were, not daring to boldly look at it. It had heartened him more to look ahead of things; to ride round the farm and note the rich promise of the year; to nurse the hope that, after all his reverses, he might yet be able to parry the impending blow, and in the end win back something of his old financial freedom. But now—it was only too plain—bankruptcy stared him in the face.

He sat in his chair one night and stared back at it. He could do so now with calm eyes and even with a sense of rest. The inevitable, once seen by owners of reason, is both quietening and stimulating. With resignation it will bring to most strong natures a dogged defiance, a

do-what-you-will attitude of mind, which will float them over the most turbulent sea of trouble. To-night the low growl of thunder approaching had a sort of menace in it which stirred Harvey strangely. He got up and paced to and fro, and with every fresh growl his jaw hardened the more and his eye took a steelier light. But presently he sank into his chair again with quivering lip. It was at the thought of his wife and child—the thought that the former had still to be told of this disaster; that the latter could never be heir of Springlands.

Harvey's young wife had won a heart to which one passion was the passion of its life. For these many years it had been so, and for four of them she had been the idolised queen of the yeoman's little kingdom. But he, as its ruler, had never intruded his troubles and anxieties upon her. They had been burden enough to him, but he had felt equal himself to the carrying of them, and he had done so, saying nothing. She was as ignorant now of the coming crash as the babe she had borne him. The reflection pierced him through.

He sprang to his feet and resumed his pacing to and fro. The storm-fiends flashed their swords and bellowed at him, while the windows shook under volleys of hail which might have been so much small-shot. Godfrey walked and turned, turned and walked, heeding nothing.

He must have covered a couple of miles when at last he came to a halt, watch in hand. The watch saw a face as hard as brass, a mouth of scorn, eyes which had the devil in them. Harvey, on his side, saw that it was close on midnight. The storm was grumbling its way down the vale, and a faint drip, drip without told him that the rain had gone with it.

'The court opens at ten. At ten thirty the petition will be filed. Good. Now for a turn in the open.'

He left the room, carefully locking the door, as his habit was. Then, reaching for his hat, he moved to the garden exit of the house, but stopped short at seeing a shaft of light across his path. It came from the kitchen. Who could be about at that hour? He pushed open the door and looked in. At the same moment Dame Druce looked up. She was plucking fowls.

'Why so busy, dame?'

He went in and sank down on a chair. A new thought had lamed him. What would become of the dear old servitor who had nursed him as a boy, who had grafted herself by years of devotion on to the life of Springfields till she seemed indissoluble with it?

'They're for Wanborough market to-morrow, Master Godfrey. Sally was tired out with her dairying, an' her head was a-nodding, an' her mouth stretching fit to crick itself; so I sent the wench to bed an' started on them myself. Moreover,' said she, looking across to him with her keen, dark eyes, 'fowl-plucking helps a body to think, just as knitting a stocking does; an' I want to think, Master Godfrey—I want to think.'

He looked at her sharply.

'Yes; I know. You can't hide things from me as you do from the missis. Your face tells most when you fancy it tells nothing at all; an' more than that, there's a public at Shirley with four-ale to loosen tattling tongues. The man in brown likes his four-ale.'

He sat silent with compressed lips.

'But never mind what he may have said, Master Godfrey, or how much may be known in Shirley about your affairs. Have you ever given a thought to the money your great-grandfather drew at the time of the Wanborough Bank scare? Have you ever considered it likely that the thieves who stole in, an' then stole his poor life, as well as the plate an' things, never found the money at all, in spite of their ransacking high and low? Has it ever crossed your mind, knowing as you do of all the queer holes an' corners an' secret places in th' old house, that the money might be lying here now? Or if not here, under the roof, that it might be somewhere near? Think now!'

Harvey did think, and with kindling eyes.

'He drew the money in gold,' continued the dame, 'because he never could abide paper-money of any sort; but, as far as I have heard, not a soul in the place ever saw him handle a guinea of it. How can we be sure, then, whether them thieves did so either?'

'It was a natural inference,' exclaimed Godfrey. 'The safe was found empty, and it was known that he constantly used it for depositing his cash in.'

'Safe! It were little better than a tin box,' cried the dame. 'They make such things different nowadays. He might have turned the lock on ten, or maybe twenty, pounds; but would he put away more than a thousand pounds in such a flimsy thing, with a crowd of dirty pea-pickers within a stone's-throw of his winders? Would he do that and carry his keys to market with an easy mind?'

Godfrey fidgeted in his chair.

'But my grandfather with his own eyes saw him lock up the money!'

'Maybe so. But did he see him unlock it? Did he, now?'

Harvey pushed his hand through his hair, staring at her hard.

'Becky, there's just enough reason in your theory to make it a torture to think of. I would raze Springfields to the ground if I thought its old bowels held in them this treasure. The money, little as it might come to, would tide me over these difficulties, and leave me a bit of margin to forestall others. Is it here, or is it not here?'

'I should say it's not here,' said Dame Druce, making the feathers fly.

'Why?' queried Godfrey, tugging at his hair.

'Because he was so fond of the Priory ruins,' said the dame darkly.

'The Priory ruins! A heap of old stones. The idea is absurd,' cried Godfrey.

'Maybe so; but it's got inside me, an' bothers me like a worm in the head. The Priory, you see, was the trysting-place when he an' Miss Stringer that was were courting. An' it was the post-office, so to speak, where, when they couldn't meet, they planted their notes and things. Many's the time he was seen coming down the hill feasting on a letter he'd found there. He was as blind to watchers as he was to the molehills he'd tumble over. No one could ever find the hiding-place—it was known to them two alone. The poor lady died, as you know, an' the better part of him went to the churchyard with her; but just before his death he took to going again to the Priory—sometimes by the lane, sometimes by the secret passage, which at that time hadn't been walled up. It may have been old feeling as pulled him there; it may have been something else. When a man has money in his pockets or out of them he likes to look at it now and again. Master Godfrey, before you knock down Springfields get your hand in by starting on the Priory ruins.'

'But why, with such a clear head between your shoulders, has all this not occurred to you before?'

'Because I did not know till three hours ago that the passage was not bricked up till your grandfather's discovery of it five years after the murder.'

'And who told you that?'

'Old Jacob Fellowes, who did the work with his own trowel. He came back to Shirley yesterday to stay with his son Saul, Mark Ruthwood's landlord. Mrs Baxter had asked him to bring the barn for to-morrow's baking. I gave him a drop o' perry, an' because he'd had drops before here, in times gone, it took him back to them, an' that's how it came out about the passage.'

Godfrey started up.

'I'll take a walk to the Priory, dame. I should like to study its old features by the light of this theory of yours. It has made

them quite interesting. But I may as well have a light of another sort. Where's the lantern—the dark one?’

‘In the usual place, Master Godfrey; just

inside the wash’ns, on the left-hand shelf. But I doubt whether you’ll want a light more than half your time. The sky is ablaze with the sheet-lightning the storm has left.’

INDUSTRIES OF IRELAND.—THE POPLIN MANUFACTURE:

A ROYAL FABRIC.

By MARY GORGES.



WE may well name the Irish Poplin ‘a royal fabric,’ both for its own intrinsic merits and for the favour it has received from our Queen, beginning even before her coronation and steadily continued since.

On entering Messrs Atkinson’s poplin warehouse, College Green, Dublin, we see enshrined in a glass case against the wall two bits of the poplin ordered by the Duchess of Kent in 1836 for the Princess Victoria. The design is the rose, shamrock, and thistle, wrought in colours and running in bands across a white ground. It has a quaint look now, this remnant of a robe which once adorned the slight figure of the girl to whom the world was opening out its wonder-story, whose heart was beating high with hope and joy and anticipation. How many hopes have been fulfilled, how many joyous anticipations realised, what homage and what triumphs have been hers, of how many pageants has she been the star and centre, since those days of innocent girlhood! And oh! what nights of weeping, what anguish of bereavement, what cares and troubles and perplexities, have embittered that cup of earthly splendour! These little bits of poplin bring it all back; and linking their memories with that of the great Jubilee, not long past, we pause a moment with softened thoughts to ‘look upon this picture and on that!’

The young Queen was not long in showing her appreciation of Irish poplin. In August 1837 she appointed Mr Richard Atkinson ‘Irish Tabinet Manufacturer to Her Majesty;’ and there has never been any great wedding or public occasion since without an order from the Queen for this beautiful fabric, an example followed by the royalties and aristocracy of all lands.

The poplin manufacture in Ireland owes its origin to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when thousands of silk-weavers from Lyons sought refuge in England, and settled at Spitalfields, London, a portion of these subsequently setting up their looms in Dublin in 1693. In the hands of their descendants the trade remains; no one, even now, when all customs and traditions are being ruthlessly trampled down, ever dreaming of infringing the unwritten law which forbids apprenticeship to the silk-weaving outside of the community.

Why this manufacture should take root and prosper in Dublin as it has done I know not; but it is a fact that nothing really excellent in poplins can be had elsewhere, so that Ireland may fairly claim it as a speciality of her capital. In the old streets of Dublin are splendid houses, now given up to dust and decay, down whose noble staircases once fluttered the beautiful women who adorned the Irish Court of the day; and it requires little imagination to picture them arrayed in the lovely brocades of their native land.

But the manufacture had not attained its present perfection and variety till after the Jacquard loom was invented in 1800, when a simple pedal put in motion by the weaver’s feet superseded a complicated and difficult plan, by which, when the design was richly figured, the threads were grouped into a system, and raised simultaneously by a child, or ‘drawboy,’ in the order and at the time required by the weaver.

Poplin is the successful combination of silk and wool, the dyeing of which requires the greatest skill and care, the most delicate shades having to be produced to order. Considering its beauty and great durability, it is relatively an inexpensive material, ranging from three shillings and ninepence to eleven shillings and sixpence per yard, and in brocades from six shillings and sixpence to seventeen shillings and sixpence per yard. The tissue used in the gold and silver brocades is of the pure metal. I was informed by the courteous manager of Messrs Atkinson’s firm that they are at present manufacturing a superb white poplin with rich design in gold for a great wedding soon to take place in London. Three pounds five shillings per yard seemed by no means an extravagant price for so beautiful and costly a fabric. These brocades are greatly patronised by the Queen and the Princess of Wales, and notably by our American visitors.

The proverbial reproach of Irish apathy certainly does not apply here, for the poplin manufacture has not been allowed to fall behind in the keen competition of the day. It owes much to the late senior partner, Mr R. Atkinson, who brought to bear on it talent, taste, and a judgment of colours ‘seldom equalled, never surpassed.’ There is a new light texture, gossamer poplin, in the softest shades, and in tartans and checks, which forms a lovely material for children and young

ladies' dresses, as well as blouses, ties, &c. I find that a dress length of any special colour can be made to order in fourteen days, and any original design carried out. A charming design (of wild flowers, I think) was recently forwarded by a young lady, which, worked out on the ground chosen, produced a most lovely effect.

Little of the old Huguenot blood is left, yet the weavers retain some French characteristics. Thrift is one (though my informant, an employer himself, adds 'not strikingly so'), and they are 'a very cheerful, contented body, labour disputes being unknown, employers and employed working harmoniously together.'

Weavers are paid by the yard, and the earning-power varies greatly. Sometimes a man earns a higher weekly wage on a work at ninepence or tenpence per yard than a more clever and experienced workman on a finer at one shilling and fourpence per yard, needing great care. Some of the work runs to four shillings a yard (to the weaver), and in heavy gold brocades to eight shillings—this latter being so severe a test of the man's skill and care that it may not mean more than three pounds a week. Some men have made fourteen yards per day of tartan, requiring six shuttles, at elevenpence per yard (three pounds seventeen shillings per week), and could keep this up for weeks, no machine probably being able to do as much of such fancy work. Still, the average

wage hardly exceeds one pound five shillings per week, including elderly men and apprentices, some seeming to find it all they can do to earn fifteen shillings per week.

Several women are among the weavers, and 'they make careful workers, clean and reliable.' I may add that all the warping and winding is done by women.

When Princess Alexandra of Denmark arrived in England for her marriage, she wore, on her entry into London, a poplin gown in a soft shade of lilac, which she had ordered to be manufactured by a Dublin firm for the occasion. On the state entry of Her Royal Highness into Dublin a few years ago, she appeared in poplin of a beautiful olive-green shade, and of a make of poplin then introduced for the first time, and ever since called 'Princess Poplin.' At Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Teck's exhibition of silk textiles at Stafford House, of more recent date, the Princess of Wales testified her appreciation of poplin in the genial way which endears her to every one. Messrs Atkinson's exhibit of poplins there was greatly admired and surrounded by an aristocratic crowd, among whom a way was cleared when Her Royal Highness appeared. The Princess went round the exhibit, looking at piece after piece with keen interest; finally, taking up one and passing it lightly through her hands, she exclaimed with emphasis, 'I love poplin!'

AN INCIDENT OF 1870.



At seven o'clock on the morning of the 2d December 1870, before it was fully light, the Württembergers surprised us by a sudden, rapid attack on Champigny, which we had only wrested from them two days before after severe fighting and heavy losses. Our troops, who had spent the previous day, after the engagement of the 30th November, in burying the dead and fortifying the houses in the village, believed themselves secure from any offensive return of the Prussians, and were, in consequence, taken at a great disadvantage by this unexpected sally. The Mobiles, numbed and stupefied by their night in the open air, were utterly unprepared for action, and, falling into disorder, retreated towards the plain; but several companies of the 35th proved themselves equal to the emergency, and stubbornly maintained their ground until the arrival of reinforcements. In spite, however, of the heroic behaviour of our troops, the Prussians once more gained possession of a considerable portion of the village, and it was not until the arrival of Trochu's formidable artillery that we succeeded in retaking one-half only of what we had lost, and, even then, merely by disputing it barricade by barricade, and inch by inch, under a raking fire from the enemy's

guns. Darkness at last put an end to hostilities and silenced the deafening roar of the *mitrailleuses* which had rattled incessantly throughout the day. Towards five o'clock I found myself, along with a small remnant of the 35th, in possession of a little wayside inn at the entrance to Champigny. It was a wretched place at best, riddled by shot and shell, and offered but scanty protection against the cold; and as I looked at the many poor fellows lying dead within and without its walls, and listened to the groans of the wounded, I thought that it had been dearly purchased. Our first consideration was for the survivors, especially those injured, whose terrible sufferings were cruelly aggravated by the fearful cold; so, after despatching the most urgent cases to the nearest ambulance, we prepared to mitigate, as far as lay in our power, the condition of those who remained. Owing to the amount of debris which the bursting of shells had dislodged from shutters and ceiling earlier in the day, there was no lack of tinder, and in a very short time I had the satisfaction of seeing my sadly-diminished company thawing their stiffened limbs around a blazing fire. With the help of a young lieutenant, named Lacaille, who had some slight knowledge of surgery, I then proceeded to give aid to the wounded, by the

application of rough bandages, torn from whatever came handiest, and hastily improvised tourniquets. The poor fellows accepted our clumsy ministrations with touching gratitude, and bore the rude and awkward handling without a murmur. When we had arranged things as comfortably as we knew how, and divided the scanty rations that remained equally among them, we turned our attention to stopping up as many of the breaches in the walls as possible; for even under shelter and beside a fire the cold seemed to penetrate to one's very marrow. From some prisoners who had been brought in that afternoon we had received the depressing intelligence that 150,000 Prussians were at that moment massed in the woods of Creully; and through the gaps in the walls I could see the fires of our outposts, lighted by order of the general in the vain hope of deluding the enemy into believing our forces equally formidable. That night, while the thermometer registered ten degrees of frost, hundreds of our men were camped in the open plain around wretched smoky fires, built of freshly-cut logs, or packed closely together, the better to preserve vitality, crouched shivering beneath the walls of the houses in the village. The trenches, too, where the fight had been thickest, were piled high with our dead; and, under the cold light of the moon, the frost completed for the dying what the bullets had left undone. In spite of the number of wounded that had been sent off to Paris in the boats flying the white flag with the scarlet cross, the field ambulances were full to overflowing, and presented more the appearance of butchers' shambles than of hospitals.

By the time Lacaille and I had completed our self-imposed duties, and excluded as much of the biting cold as possible, night had fairly set in, and we began to think we had earned a brief respite from our labours. The apartment where we had taken up our quarters was large and spacious, with three good windows, and had evidently been the common dining-saloon of the hostelry, for it was situated on the ground floor, and bore traces of the Prussians' devastating occupation in the mutilated remains of a long table and a considerable number of bottomless chairs which were strewn around. A few of the latter had been cushioned, so we utilised the seats as pillows for the wounded, while the arms and legs furnished capital firewood. As the night wore on, the rough chatter of the men grouped around the fire became more and more desultory, until it finally ceased altogether; and, utterly exhausted, even the wounded at last found temporary relief in an uneasy slumber. Outside, nothing broke the stillness but the monotonous tramp of the sentries, as, fearful of pausing even an instant in the benumbing frost, they marched continuously backwards and forwards. After the din and roar of the battle, the silence of the night seemed almost abnormal, and I could not help envying Lacaille, who had fallen asleep where he sat, with his back against the

wall, and a half-smoked pipe still between his lips.

Although dead tired, I could not even rest quietly in one place, but moved constantly to and fro on one pretext or another, picking my way carefully over the recumbent figures on the floor. This acute restlessness, the result doubtless of over-fatigue, lasted for some hours, and it must have been getting on to three o'clock in the morning when, having thrown fresh logs on the fire and filled my pipe for the third time, I finally settled down by Lacaille's side, and, gradually succumbing to the drowsiness which was slowly stealing over me, fell into a sort of intermittent doze. How long this state of semi-consciousness lasted I do not exactly know, but all at once I was completely roused from it by a heavy fall, succeeded by a low reverberating rumble like the distant dropping of musketry. It seemed to come from the street, and in an instant I was on my feet and had seized a *chassepot*, convinced that the enemy was once more upon us. Rousing Lacaille, who had evidently heard nothing and was still sleeping profoundly, I told him my suspicions, and asked him to follow me as quietly as possible and without disturbing the men, as I did not wish to alarm them needlessly. The icy blast that greeted us as I unfastened the door sent the blood tingling to our very finger-tips, and made us appreciate more thoroughly the comparative comfort of the room we had just left. Not a soul was visible the whole length of the deserted street but one unfortunate sentry, whose shadow cast by the moonlight made him appear gigantically tall, as he shouldered his musket and came towards us with the usual challenge. He saluted respectfully as he recognised us, and in answer to our inquiries assured us he had heard nothing although he had been on duty for an hour, and had passed the hostelry just five minutes before. I was much puzzled by this assertion, but in spite of it insisted on searching the outside of the premises on my own account, and left no corner unexplored, but without discovering the slightest elucidation of the mystery. Lacaille, who assisted me, though in a somewhat half-hearted fashion, was evidently becoming rather sceptical about the matter, and suggested that the fall of some loosened plaster or rafter might explain it. Seeing, therefore, that I had no better explanation to offer, and was likely to meet with little sympathy from either him or the sentry, whose teeth were chattering with cold, I contented myself with a parting injunction to the latter to keep a sharp lookout for anything of a suspicious nature, and led the way back to the house.

Some of the men whom our movements had disturbed looked up anxiously as we re-entered, but, apparently satisfied from our faces that nothing important was amiss, soon settled down

again, and resumed their interrupted slumbers. After warming himself at the fire Lacaille followed their example, and I was once more left to my own meditations. Although baffled I was not convinced, and as sleep was effectually banished as far as I was concerned, I relit my pipe, and began a minute and careful investigation of the room. I don't exactly know what I expected to find; but as I was poking about aimlessly in a heap of rubbish in a corner near the door my foot suddenly caught on something hard, and I narrowly escaped coming heavily to the ground. Stooping down to examine the cause, I saw, to my surprise, that it was an iron ring, apparently firmly attached to the floor, over which I had stumbled, and in an instant a new and brilliant idea flashed into my mind. Noiselessly and with the greatest care, I hastily cleared a space round it, and found, as I anticipated, that it was fastened, not to the floor, but to a trap-door let into it. Of course the natural inference which followed was that there must be cellars underneath of which we had been totally ignorant, and I now felt perfectly convinced that the unaccountable rumbling sound had issued from their depths. What ought I to do? Waken Lacaille and again ask his assistance in what might once more prove a wild-goose chase? No. I felt that it would be *infra dig.* to risk a second failure of the kind, and at once resolved to act on my own responsibility.

Quietly raising the lid, which moved easily on its hinges as if recently oiled, I peered curiously into the murky darkness beneath; but all that I could distinguish was the three top rungs of a ladder, which presumably connected the room where I stood with the premises underground. All was still as the grave, but nevertheless the impression that it was there I must seek the solution of the inexplicable noise grew stronger and stronger within me. Most probably, as Lacaille had suggested, it might be simply enough explained by the fall of some rubbish or plaster; but whatever the reason might be, I felt it incumbent on me as chief officer present to investigate the affair more thoroughly. Having arrived at this determination, I stuck a brace of pistols in my belt, lit a lantern with a brand from the fire, and, drawing the shade across it, returned to the trap-door.

I have heard it stated by people of experience that on the eve of a great danger one sometimes receives a warning; but for my part I can only affirm that as I sat on the edge of the trap, with my legs dangling over the unexplored abyss, I had no intuition whatever of the fate which awaited me below. There was a considerable drop from the floor to the first step of the ladder, and I endured a moment or two of very unpleasant suspense as I hung by my hands from the sides of the hatchway and groped wildly for a footing. I found it at last, how-

ever, and planted myself firmly on it; but even then I had to proceed with the utmost caution, as several of the rungs were either broken or missing altogether. The air as I descended smelt as damp and mouldy as a mortuary, and as the icy cold gripped me like a vice I repeatedly cursed myself for an officious fool as I groped my way to the bottom; and had it not been for a certain dogged pertinacity which has always been one of my strongest characteristics, I think I should then and there have gladly abandoned the adventure. As it was, having begun, I resolved to see it through, so continued to descend as noiselessly as possible.

It was no easy task I had undertaken, for, the cellar being deep, the ladder was proportionately long; and, in addition to being hampered by the lantern, my extremities were so benumbed with cold that they had little or no feeling left in them. At last I seemed to be nearing the end of my journey, as I could not feel any other rung beneath where I stood, and was groping helplessly for the ground with one foot, when I was suddenly startled by a sharp rustling immediately behind me. I swung round instantly, and my disengaged hand instinctively closed on one of the pistols at my side; but, to my infinite surprise, the rustling also ceased, and was succeeded by the same impenetrable silence. 'Rats, no doubt,' I said to myself, and was just on the point of uncovering my lantern with the intention of scaring them, when a new and unexpected noise made me again pause abruptly. This time I entertained no doubt as to its origin, for I had unmistakably heard a suppressed sneeze. At this certainty a cold perspiration broke over me as I stood precariously balancing on the ladder, while the danger of my position grew momentarily more imminent. That I had in my recklessness run my neck straight into the enemy's noose I did not for an instant doubt, especially when I remembered that only the previous forenoon the premises had been occupied by the Prussians. I have been through a number of adventures in my day, and run many hair-breadth escapes, but I don't think I ever felt such really abject fear take possession of me as at that moment. I think the darkness had something to do with it; for it is one thing to fight an enemy face to face in the open, and another to find yourself suddenly ambushed by an invisible, and consequently formidable, antagonist. At the thought of being outnumbered and probably butchered alone in that gloomy hole, within hail of my comrades, my manhood revolted; and as my courage reasserted itself I resolved to at least make a bid for liberty.

Glancing apprehensively upwards, I was intensely relieved to find that there was no betraying light visible through the door, which I had left open, as it was situated far from the fire, under a sloping part of the roof, in a remote corner of the room. This fortunate circum-

stance inspired me with the faint hope that my proximity might be still undiscovered; so, under shelter of the friendly darkness, I cautiously began to retrace my steps. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*; but that seemed likely to cost more than enough, for before I had attained the second, the wood creaked ominously beneath my weight. Discovery seemed imminent, and as if to increase the horror of the situation, I heard the men beginning to move about overhead. The cold, too, had begun to affect me seriously, and my hands, which were stiff as boards, had difficulty in retaining their grasp of the ladder.

I don't know how long I stood dumbly waiting there in an agony of suspense, with my heart thumping fiercely against my ribs—but it seemed to me like hours—before I plucked up sufficient courage to proceed. I had unfortunately begun to ascend with my back to the ladder, as that was the position into which I had fallen when first scared, so my upward progress was beset with even greater difficulties than my downward. I dared not attempt to turn, for I was now so powerless and unwieldy with cold that an uncertain or clumsy movement would probably cost me my life. With infinite care, however, I managed, by placing my hands on the rung above my head, to raise myself one degree higher, and had again paused to recruit before attempting another, when suddenly there was a loud exclamation overhead. In the excited state of my nerves this proved the proverbial last straw. With the unexpected shock I started and fell forward, almost losing my balance, and in a frantic effort to retain it the lantern slipped from my hold and fell crashing to the ground.

An ominous pause succeeded this catastrophe, in which I automatically counted the laboured beating of my heart, and then, as the oil ignited and flared blindingly up in my face, I heard a brief ejaculation of surprise, followed by a guttural German oath. The next instant I was dragged roughly to the ground; my arms were rudely pinioned to my sides; while at the same time I heard the unmistakable click of a pistol, and felt its cold muzzle pressed hard against my chin.

When Lacaille awoke and discovered my absence he was not at first surprised, as he supposed I had—as he termed it—got another attack of the fidgets; but as time went on and I failed to return, he became uneasy, and, on finding the open trap-door, seriously alarmed. His first idea was that I had fallen down and was probably lying unconscious at the bottom of the ladder, and in this belief he hastily roused some of the men, to whom he imparted his suspicions. It was they whom I heard moving about in quest of a rope with which to lower one of their number to my assistance, and it was Lacaille's exclamation on finding what he sought that unfortunately precipitated my fate.

As they were preparing to put their plan into speedy execution, they were suddenly arrested by a loud crash, followed by the muffled report of a pistol. For an instant they stood spell-bound, mutely staring into each other's frightened faces; but the next they were at the trap-door, and, looking down, beheld, brightly illuminated by the still blazing oil, the uniform of the hated Prussians. They were a small band of four officers who had secreted themselves there early in the day during the retaking of the hostelry, probably with the view to surprising us later on; and it was an unfortunate stumble over a wine-cask that had roused me from my sleep and attracted my attention to their hiding-place. Taken in a snare from which there was no possible escape, their fate was swift and inevitable. With a howl of execration as they caught sight of my prostrate body, the Mobiles seized their *chassepots*, and eagerly thrusting them down the aperture, shot them like rats in a hole. Then swarming down the ladder, they carefully raised what they fully believed to be my corpse, and with great difficulty bore me to the room above.

I must certainly have presented a ghastly spectacle, with my livid face smeared with blood which flowed copiously from my shattered jaw; but although the men dolefully shook their heads, Lacaille insisted on carrying me to the nearest field-ambulance. Arrived there, the doctor, who was evidently of the men's persuasion, could with difficulty be prevailed upon to make any further examination, and very reluctantly, protesting that it was useless, set about attempts at resuscitation. However, to his great amazement and the intense relief of my lieutenant, his efforts were successful, and before Lacaille left he had received the comforting assurance that, although extremely grave, the case was not altogether hopeless. So there I lay throughout the completion of the campaigning disaster, until, at the urgent request of my friend—to whom I undoubtedly owe my life—I was, as soon as practicable, but with great difficulty, removed to Paris, where I received comfort and attention impossible to be obtained in the rough shelter of a field-ambulance.

Thus it happened that when I regained the possession of my faculties once more I found myself lying in the ward of a Paris hospital with my head swathed in bandages.

The interval which elapsed between the firing of the pistol and my return to consciousness had been passed in a kind of feverish nightmare, in which I was continually making frenzied but ineffectual attempts to scale the ladder, which were as invariably frustrated by my mother, who, in the uniform of a Prussian officer, brutally thrust me down again to the bottom. What grieved and puzzled me most in my delirious imaginings was the unaccountable behaviour of the person who should naturally have befriended me; and when I awoke that morning to life and

reason, and found her bending solicitously over me, I thought, in my relief, that I was in heaven. The burning pain in my mouth, however, soon dispelled that illusion, although the doctor has since assured me that it was within an ace of being fulfilled. My life was saved, but it was many days ere I was pronounced fairly out of danger; and the capitulation of Paris was a *fait accompli* before I was strong enough to learn the details of my wonderful escape. That it was indeed a marvellous one I have no hesitation in saying, for if the pistol, instead of being pressed closely against my chin, had been held even two inches away, my head would have been blown to atoms. Placed as it was, however, it missed its purchase, and the bullet, passing clean through the chin and roof of the month behind the nose, embedded itself firmly in the forehead beneath the frontal bone, and immediately between the eyes; and there it remained in spite of repeated attempts to dislodge it. No amount of probing availed to move it; and at last, after defying the efforts of the most renowned surgeons in Paris, it was abandoned as hopeless, and I was told I must resign myself to bearing this memento of the Prussians in my forehead to the end of my days.

It was too much. The discomfort I suffered was a mere bagatelle compared with the indignity of the thing; and as soon as I could travel and had obtained a permit I crossed the Channel, and, as a forlorn hope, placed myself in the hands of a celebrated English surgeon. Animated, doubtless, by a desire to outshine our French doctors, as well as by a laudable wish to succeed in the interests of science, he held several consultations with his learned compeers before proceeding to operate. The result of their united deliberations was that he finally drilled a hole or species of tunnel right through the upper part of my nose, and inserting his instrument beneath the bone, probed vigorously for the bullet, but, without success. That bullet had evidently found its billet, and at last, after various ineffectual essays to move it, he too, like the Frenchmen, gave it up in despair; and, sick at heart, I quitted the hospital and took rooms at a neighbouring hotel.

I had no intention of returning immediately to Paris, for although my chief object in coming to England had been defeated, I still determined to do some sight-seeing before leaving London.

A few days later a singular thing occurred. As I sat reading the newspapers after breakfast, my nose, without any apparent reason, suddenly began to bleed violently. At the same time I felt the pressure in the region of the forehead released; something dropped into the upper part of my nose; and, putting up my hand, I found the bullet lying in the hole prepared for its reception by the surgeon. As the bleeding still

continued in rather an alarming fashion, I hailed a cab and drove straight to the house of the great doctor. He was at home, fortunately, and having speedily stopped the hæmorrhage and extracted the bullet, insisted on bearing me off in triumph to the hospital, where I was exhibited to an admiring circle of students as a proof of his surgical skill. Some days later the aperture was permanently filled up with a sort of composition; and all that now remains of my night's adventure in Champigny is the two small gray patches which somewhat disfigure each side of my formerly handsome nose.

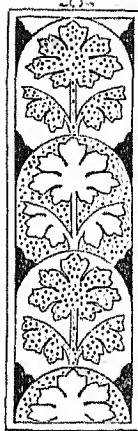
LIFE AND TIME.

TIME sits in silence, patient, at his loom
And throws untired his shuttles of moon and sun,
And weaves with flying strands of dark and light,
And weaves again for ever, as it wanes,
His pageant of the living hours that die—
Night treading lonely through a land of sleep;
Dawn that has dreams of Night within her eyes;
Day with the bloom of Morning on her cheeks;
Day flushed from labours in the stress of Noon;
And Eve whose eyes are sad with dreams of Day.

And circling in the dazzle and the dark,
In all the ever-fading, growing gloom
And glory, swings the clamorous world of men:
Clamour of Peace, who sows her happy fields
Or feasts with all her sons at harvest-home;
Of War, that wields his lightnings like a god
And thunders god-like from his clouds, and swirls
His red rain on the fields that Peace has sown;
Of Joy, who brims his cup and shouts his songs
Exultant in a bubble-heaven that bursts;
Of Death, who snows his winter where he will,
And walks amid a wailing as of winds;
Of Hope, who, blinded by his first sunrise,
Waits for the slow to-morrow and dies to-day;
Of Love, whose earth and hell and heaven are one;
Of Loss, that whimpers at the heels of Love;
Of Pity and Hate, of Anguish and Despair—

Glamour of all the voices of the world
Moan to him like a murmur of his loom:
But heedless whether men may laugh or weep,
And careless ever though they live or die,
Time sits in silence at his spanless web
And throws untired his shuttles of moon and sun,
And weaves anew his pageant as it wanes—
Dawn that has dreams of Night within her eyes;
Day with the bloom of Morning on her cheeks;
Day flushed from labours in the stress of Noon;
And Eve whose eyes are dim with dreams of Day;
And Night who lingers saddening still for Dawn.

A. ST JOHN ADEOCK.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

A CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

WILD creatures are every whit as liable as human beings to make mistakes and meet with fatal accidents, but naturally only a very small proportion of such 'deaths by misadventure' in the animal world are observed, and only a few of the observed cases are recorded. During the last few years I have noted any accidents which have been reported from trustworthy sources, and very singular some of the entries on this obituary list are. We might roughly divide these fatalities into two classes: (1) Those for which man and his works are indirectly responsible; and (2) Those incidental to purely natural conditions of life, man not intervening. No particular purpose would be served by attempting any classification, however; and, by the reader's leave, I will strain off the contents of my note-book as they come.

We need not glance at the long tale of casualties caused nightly by lighthouse lanterns and daily by telegraph-lines and wire-fences; only light-keepers and gamekeepers know how great is the loss of bird-life through these means. The light, of course, is a well-recognised source of disaster; but a new telegraph-line or new wire-fence stretched across a grouse moor is also a fruitful source of death amongst game.

Birds occasionally come to grief through over-estimating the capacity of the gullet. One such case was that of a heron which was found dead on the bank of the mill-stream at Swinton, in Berwickshire; the abnormally swelled neck invited examination, and the knife revealed a large water-vole firmly wedged half-way down to the crop. Water-voles form a standing dish in the dietary of the heron, and this bird must have gulped down its prey without that preliminary eye-measurement any ordinarily judicious bird would give a doubtful morsel; possibly the approach of a friend may have suggested the advisability of hasty disposal.

More curious are the cases of pheasants swallowing or trying to swallow mice—a feat the pheasant

has no business to attempt in the first place. One such fatality was reported from a farm in Surrey a couple of years ago. The bird, a fine cock, was picked up dead, and from the corner of its beak protruded an inch of tail. A mouse had stuck in the pheasant's throat and choked it. Whether the bird would have survived the meal had the mouse reached its crop is another matter; it seems unlikely that it could eat the dinner of hawk or owl with impunity.

Youthful inexperience may perhaps explain the very curious mishap which cost a young merganser its life. This bird, one day in July 1895, was found floating on Lough Currane, county Kerry. It was plump and in healthy condition, but the left nostril was firmly plugged by a young eel, part of which hung outside, while the remainder, the head portion, was in the bird's throat. The only way of accounting for the eel's presence in a situation equally embarrassing to both parties is to assume that the fish was seized by the tail, and that, before it could be gulped down, it stuck its head into the orifice, which to its uninstructed intelligence promised safety, and 'got home.'

Mention of the eel recalls an odd fatality to a snake which I found very awkwardly situated. He was only a little snake, and had fallen into the mistake of supposing that he could swallow a frog at least six times his own girth; he had drawn himself over one hind-leg like a stocking up to the frog's thigh, and couldn't get any farther. The state of the encased leg showed that the two had been in this position for some days, and neither party had kick or wriggle left in him when I picked them up.

A sad warning to young gallinaceous birds to look where they are going is furnished by an incident which occurred on Dalnaspidal Moor, in Perthshire, three years ago. The keeper, going over the ground to see how the young birds were progressing, put up a hen grouse which was sheltering her brood from the rain; five chicks, after the manner of their kind when alarmed, scattered in all directions when their mother rose, and one

in its blind haste impaled itself on a sharp spike of burnt heather. The thorn-like point passed between the branches of the lower mandible right through the head, killing the chick on the spot.

Parent birds sometimes display grave lack of discretion in their choice of nesting materials. I have note of two instances in which fledglings have been found hanged by a loop of thread or worsted which formed part of the nest lining; and it is common to find young birds (sparrows, starlings, swallows, and blackbirds occur to mind) detained in the nest long after their wings are fully furnished by threads entangling their feet. I once caught a sparrow in a curious way. In taking flight from a field of vetches, its leg was seized and firmly held by one of the corkscrew-like tendrils. The occurrence was impressed upon my memory because the owner of the field called me names (I was a small boy) for letting the bird go.

Birds of the wader kind not infrequently get into serious trouble with the bivalves they encounter on their walks abroad. These creatures feed with the tongue protruded from between the parted shells, and the slightest touch on this organ is accepted as signal of danger, when a rapid movement draws in the tongue and closes the shell. I have record of two cases of the common sandpiper being trapped by mussels on which they had lightly thought to dine: each was caught by the beak and held fast, to starve or drown. Mr. Armitstead, in his work on fish-hatcheries, mentions a case in which a water-hen was thus made prisoner by a swan mussel; the bird was found dead, its beak firmly held in the vice-like grip of the shells. It is not, of course, to be supposed that the bivalve acts with retributive intent; the tongue's swift withdrawal sucks the foreign body with it, and the shells with their powerful closing muscle form a natural 'gin.' It is a mere chance which side comes off best. If the shell-fish traps the toe of, say, a large gull, so much the worse for the shell-fish, for the gull will have the shell open with his powerful beak, or know the reason why; if, on the other hand, some tiny fish is the intruder, so much the worse for him. Very young crabs are frequently the victims of shell-fish of various kinds. Not long ago I saw an oyster containing an infant crab which it had captured. The crab was alive when the oyster was opened; it must have been an exceedingly troublesome guest to a host of such restful habit!

Fishes make very odd mistakes sometimes; at least piscine folly seems the only explanation of an incident which was observed at Waterville, county Kerry, a couple of years since. Some gulls, frightened from the beach where they were feeding, flew seawards and settled on the water a hundred yards out. A minute or two later

attention was attracted by vigorous screeching, and one of the flock was seen making desperate efforts to rise; it was obviously struggling against some foe which was trying to drag it down, and presently it did disappear. In a few seconds, however, it came up again, and, after resting, flew away, seeming none the worse. The observers came to the conclusion that the gull's foot had been taken in mistake for an edible of some sort by a fish, probably a pollack (or lythe), which species abounds on that coast. The fish only discovered its error when it tried to swallow the foot, and found a leg and protesting bird attached thereto. When we remember how easily many sea fish are imposed upon in the matter of bait, there is nothing improbable in the theory that the gently moving red foot was taken in good faith by a fish as something to eat. It may be added that similar encounters have been observed.

Under a different category comes the accident which befell a cormorant at Cumledge near Duns one day in January 1895. That month, it will be remembered, was the coldest of a very severe winter; and warmth may have influenced the cormorant in his choice of a chimney-stalk as a temporary perch. Whether or not he settled there with the idea of getting warm we need not inquire: he did so, and in a weak moment peered down the chimney shaft. All birds are extremely susceptible to the stupefying influence of smoke, and the cormorant fell down headlong. He reached the bottom in a very ruinous condition indeed.

The following story, dating from Waverley, Mississippi, has interest apart from the curiosity of misadventure with which it terminates. One evening an owl was seen hunting what the narrator describes as a 'rabbit,' but was doubtless one of the half-dozen species of hare found in the States, across an open field. The owl was gaining upon its quarry, when a barbed wire-fence stood in the path; the rabbit instantly turned and continued his flight beside it, the owl following. The bird now swooped upon the rabbit, which dodged under the fence, whose lowest strand was just high enough to let him pass. The balked owl rose and struck again, to be beaten by the same tactics; and this occurred half-a-dozen times. At length the owl made what appeared to be a feint; the rabbit bolted through the fence as usual—to meet the owl and discover his mistake too late. He darted back just as the bird struck its talons into his back and dragged his enemy against the barbed wire. The owl either would not or could not let go, and held fast until the rabbit's struggles fairly impaled him on the barbs. From this situation, the pair were taken by the men who had been watching the chase.

In the *Field* of 19th September 1896 a very singular accident was recorded. A land-rail, in bolting across a meadow path, was run over by a

retriever which was racing with another dog. The bird was stunned by the retriever's paw, and was picked up by the dog's owner, who was following.

Golf has been responsible for several fatalities, the ball playing only too efficaciously the part of a bullet. On the North Berwick links, not long ago, a swallow was dropped dead in mid-air by a flying ball. On the Nairn links a player once brought down a gull in the same way; the bird came in collision with the ball about sixty yards from the tee, and was so badly injured that it had to be destroyed.

Cyclists have accounted for a few accidental deaths. The wheelman himself can hardly be held answerable for the death of a rabbit which bolted into his machine as it stood by the roadside, and broke its neck; and there was contributory negligence, as the lawyers say, on the part of the cat which tried to go through the wheel of a passing bicycle, and gave the rider a bad fall at the cost of its own life. Much more noteworthy than either of these was the achievement of a cyclist who, while scorching along the road (he must have been scorching), ran into a covey of partridges and killed one, his wheel passing over its neck. The only way in which this curious accident can be explained is to suppose that the birds were 'dusting' at a bend in the road, and that the cyclist's approach, concealed by the hedges, remained undetected till the enemy was literally among them.

Birds, when alarmed and travelling at a high rate of speed, appear to lose their heads sometimes. How otherwise can we account for apparently deliberate flight through the window of a dwelling, which has occurred more than once, and under circumstances that render it very unlikely that the bird was deceived by the reflection from the panes? At a big shoot in Hampshire, in the winter of 1895, one of the party saw a pheasant (which he had missed) flash over a stream, through a low covert, and straight through the glass of a cottage window. Thanks to the inferiority of the glass, the bird was uninjured, and was found playing havoc with the cottager's crockery.

There is a classic case of a wild duck which, travelling as a duck can when he chooses, came in collision with a galvanised iron pail which a girl was carrying, full of water. Such was the force of the impact that the bucket was deeply indented, and the duck crushed almost out of shape.

Predatory animals occasionally overreach themselves by following their quarry too far. Foxhounds sometimes fall into this mistake when the fox goes to ground in a drain; but hounds, being valuable, and under human control, may depend upon rescue by the spade. When an animal hunting on his own account allows zeal or appetite to outrun dis-

cretion, there is no hope for him. Witness the case of an otter which, no doubt in pursuit of frogs or eels, explored a drain of six-inch piping for a distance of one hundred and fifty yards under a meadow; he arrived at a point where the six-inch piping was replaced by tubes only four inches in diameter, and, unable to advance, found too late that he could not retreat. A flooded field obliged investigation, and the carcass of this too enterprising otter was discovered in a length of pipe which it plugged like a cork in a bottle.

A truly terrible fate was that which was seen to overtake a water-vole in a southern Scottish county in the winter of 1895. One bitterly cold day in February he was observed trying painfully to climb up the sluice-gate of a mill-pond. The boards were sheeted with ice, and the vole fell back again and again; but eventually he managed to gain foothold and began to scramble up, slipping back two inches for every three. He was wet, and the water on his coat and paws froze faster than he could climb. He stopped for a moment to rest, and his fate overtook him, his feet and the hair on his under parts freezing fast to the boards. He was out of reach from the bank, and had to be left to await the death which, let us hope, came quickly.

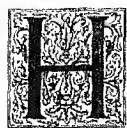
A simple and very deadly mouse-trap was discovered to a groom, some little time ago, by the short-sighted greed of mice themselves. The man happened to leave on the window-sill of the stable a bottle partly filled with oil, which he placed on its side with the mouth slightly raised. In the morning the bottle contained several mice drowned in the oil. *Facilis erat descensus*; but they could not climb the slippery slope of the bottle-neck with oily paws. This trap may be recommended for use in places overrun with mice.

A very strange capture was made in 1895 on the estate of Mr Savile Foljambe at Osberton. A rabbit-trap set in the mouth of a burrow, about three feet from the edge of a stream, was found one morning gripping in its jaws a two-pound pike. Two theories were advanced to account for the presence of the fish in the trap. One suggests that the voracious creature had struck at a young rabbit on the brink, and his impetus carried him on into the jaws of the trap. It is believed in some parts of the country that pike, like eels, can and do make journeys overland, and acceptance of a measure of this belief seems essential to acceptance of the theory stated, for a two-pound pike could hardly get up enough 'steam' to carry him three feet up the bank, however gentle the slope. More reasonable is the alternative idea, which assumes that the victim was caught by a heron, which dropped him at the mouth of the burrow, and that the fish simply wriggled into the trap, where his captor, of course, had to leave him.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VII.—STORM.



ETTIE was awakened one night by hearing the name 'Gabriel!' It was Ruth who had uttered it. The door between their rooms stood open. Hettie rose softly and crept to her sister's bedside.

'Dreaming?'

'I don't know—was I?' said Ruth dreamily, with wide-open eyes.

'Yes; about Gabriel, wasn't it?'

Ruth's look changed. 'Sit down, Hettie. He is coming home,' said she.

Hettie had always had a superstitious respect for her sister as a dreamer of dreams. Her 'visions' had frequently proved to contain a suspicion of truth; and she was never better prepared to put faith in dreams about Gabriel than at the present moment.

'Coming home?' said she, wonderingly.

'Yes. I dreamt,' said Ruth, 'that I was lying asleep. It was down in the parlour, as it seemed to me, and almost dark. I heard a step in the yard—Gabriel's step; and then the parlour door was opened, and Gabriel came in. I watched him without surprise—without any great curiosity as he seated himself in an arm-chair beside the fire. Then a curious thing happened.'

'What?'

'He was shabbily dressed,' Ruth went on. 'He looked like a tramp; for his clothes were torn and covered with mud, as though he had walked over a rough and miry road for many a mile. He stared about him with distrust. But I escaped his notice. Then he put his hand into the breast-pocket of his coat, and took out a bundle, which I saw by the light of the fire to be a bundle of bank-notes. One after the other he held them over the blaze and watched them flutter up into the chimney and disappear. Each time that a bank-note vanished like a winged thing he burst into a fit of laughter.'

Ruth spoke in an underbreath, and her look was far off, as if the dream were to her a visibly enacted drama. The noise of the shrill wind without increased the weirdness of the situation. Hettie sat at the edge of the bed, staring into her sister's face. The delicate flush upon Ruth's cheeks, the feverish brilliancy of her eyes, made her features appear almost supernaturally beautiful. It was as though she were dreaming her dream over again.

'I tried to speak—tried to tell him,' said she, 'how much we needed every bank-note we could lay hands upon in order to keep the business going, and to get ourselves out of debt to Lawyer Burtenshaw. But I couldn't move, much less find

my voice; though I struggled to rise, with the intention of snatching the notes out of his hand. At last I sprang up crying, "Gabriel—Gabriel!"—and that woke me up.'

Hettie did all in her power to reassure her sister, and persuade her to dismiss this disquieting dream from her thoughts. She lay down at Ruth's side with her arms around her, saying, 'Go to sleep, dear, and don't worry about Gabriel,' and so fell asleep herself.

Ruth grew more wakeful. It was a wild night; and, as it seemed to her excited brain, the cries of shipwrecked sailors were borne in upon the wind. Among the cries she fancied that she heard the voice of Edward Tudway; and so intensely real did the voice become, so plaintive in its appeal for help with every shuddering rush of the storm, that she looked curiously into Hettie's face to discover if the same fancy had not taken a hold upon her. But Hettie's sleep was sound.

When morning broke there was no abatement of the gale. Ruth never stirred outside the house, but lay upon the sofa in the parlour throughout the day, weary from sleeplessness and the many disquieting thoughts that were crowding upon her. Towards evening, when the cloudy, tempestuous day was drawing to a close, Jarvis came into the room with a hurried step. There was a look on his face that set her heart beating fast.

'What's the matter?' said she, half-rising as he approached. 'Has Gabriel come?'

'Don't move, Ruth,' said he, bringing a chair to her side, 'and don't be alarmed. It's only a rumour.'

He spoke in a breathless manner, however; and Ruth noticed that his dark, handsome eyes were unusually bright.

'It's only a rumour,' he reiterated, brushing some melting snowflakes off his rough pea-coat. 'Still, there may be truth in a rumour; and I want you to break it to Hettie as gently as you know how. There's a schooner in distress two or three miles up the coast'—

'What does that matter to Hettie?'

Ruth hardly tried to conceal the sense of jealousy she felt at John's undisguised concern regarding her sister's peace of mind; for, though she was devoted to Hettie—would have done anything to save her a moment's pain—she could not bear to contemplate John as equally devoted.

'Ruth, I want you to tell me candidly. I don't ask out of idle curiosity,' said John. 'Hettie doesn't really care for young Tudway?—I mean,' he hastened to add, 'they are not bound to each other?'

'Engaged?' Ruth suggested.

Jarvis nodded. 'That's what I mean.'

'No. Hettie refused him. At least,' said Ruth, 'she refused to give any promise to marry him until the *Seagull* again put into port.'

Jarvis rose quickly. 'She'll never reach port! If the rumour should prove true—if it's the *Seagull* that's in distress'—

'Tudway's ship?'

'Yes.'

Ruth ran to the window. Looking out, as though the mere fact of her suddenly intensified interest in the storm could change the course of a single flake of snow, she regarded the blackness of the gathering night with consternation and despair. The force of the gale was increasing fast. Huge rags of foam flew from the sea with the flakes of snow, while great clouds of sand rose and scurried down the dunes in full chase. If the *Seagull* was lost, and Edward Tudway drowned, Jarvis would have reason to indulge the hope of marrying Hettie some day! This was the thought that now flashed across Ruth's mind; and as she turned and looked keenly into John's face, she firmly believed that the same thought possessed him.

'Where is Hettie?' she said.

'In the office. I'll send her to you.'

He moved towards the door.

'John!'

With his hand upon the latch John looked back.

'Yes, Ruth.'

'You're sure—quite sure,' said she, 'that it's only a rumour? It may not be the *Seagull* after all'—

'Only a rumour,' said John. 'But why?'

'I was thinking, John,' she replied, 'what Hettie's reason was for not engaging herself to Tudway, as he wished her to do before he set sail.'

'Her reason?'

'Yes; she cares for another'—

'Who?'

His eager manner took away her breath. 'Don't question me,' Ruth said. 'She cares for another, or thinks she does; and she cannot make up her mind which—which she loves. But she will make up her mind to-night.'

'You mean?'

'I mean,' said Ruth, 'that the moment I tell her what we dread—the moment she has reason to fear that Tudway is in danger—she will decide. And I think—I sincerely hope'—

'What?'

'That she will decide to marry Tudway,' said Ruth. 'I hope so with all my heart.'

John stood looking down dejectedly. A rush of wind went by. 'What if Tudway should be drowned?' said he.

'Don't think of it,' said Ruth.

But when he was gone Ruth thought of it with

a sense of growing despair. What if Tudway should be drowned?

As Jarvis crossed the timber-yard he caught sight of Hettie. He saw her through the office window. She was lighting the lamp upon her father's desk. The storm seemed to give her no concern. But the hour had come when the affairs of the house must for the moment be set aside. The storm was a despot. It was forcing itself upon every one's attention. There was no possibility for Hettie to escape the general excitement and alarm which it was beginning to awaken all along the coast.

She looked up from the desk as Jarvis entered. It was evident to him that the rumours about the *Seagull* had not reached Hettie's ears.

'Ruth wants you,' said he simply. 'Will you go to her at once?'

'It's nothing pressing, I suppose?'

'Yes; it's very pressing indeed.'

He did not wait. Jarvis feared that his look might betray him, and he hurried out. He was eager to learn if any fresh news had come in from Saltfleet.

It was now dark. He went across to the 'Jolly Bacchus.' The bar-parlour was crowded. Munby, the old waiter, had never been so much in demand since he became 'boots' at this inn. Most of the Cablethorpe lifeboat crew were there. One of the coastguard, a black-bearded man, was relating to them his experience of the previous night, and of the stormy day that had just closed in.

'Last night, Ay. It was about ten-thirty. I was a-standin' outside the watch-box on the dunes at Donna Hook. Just then a signal was shown from the ship in distress on the Haile Sands. The light disappeared for all the world as if a big wave had put it out. There was nothing more seen. But at daybreak this morning, mates, there was a deal o' wreckage washed ashore—sternpost, hatches, gratings, combing, and what not. And now there's another, a schooner—the *Seagull*, as it's thought.'

At that moment a signal-gun boomed above the noise of the storm. It was the summons to the Cablethorpe lifeboatmen. The gun was fired three times from the watch-house on the dunes; and each time there could be seen, from the bar-parlour window, the red light of a rocket leaping fiercely into the black night.

Every one was soon making for the shore. Jarvis was one of the first among the crowd. The strong wind struck him in the face. The sand and keen sleet cut into his cheeks like knotted whipeord; and he was forced to fight his way towards the lifeboat station gropingly; for to look ahead, except with the utmost tact, was to be half-blinded before it was possible to get a glimpse of the sea. It was not until Jarvis had crept under the lee of the boathouse, in a cavity of the dunes, that he dared venture to

open his eyes and observe minutely what was going on around him.

A brasier or 'flare' had been lighted upon the sands. Its sparks were flying madly to leeward. The lifeboat was dimly outlined in a huge shadow, and the silhouettes of launchers and lifeboatmen in belts and oilskins moved about at its base. And now the great boat, fixed upon its clumsy carriage, began to descend slowly out of its house over the sloping planks towards the sea. Presently it came to a standstill on the sands; the horses that had been collected by torchlight from the neighbouring farms were securely yoked; and, after a delay that seemed to Jarvis almost interminable, the whips cracked, the men shouted, and a shadowy procession of lifeboat, horses, and crew moved steadily towards the sounding breakers. Suddenly the lifeboat captain came riding up on horseback out of the surge. He had been down to examine and report on the state of the flats.

'There's too much water to venture on the binks to-night,' cried he; 'sides, it's a flowing tide. We must steer for Saltfleet by the highway. For'ard!'

In order to reach Saltfleet by the highway it would be necessary to pass up the High Street of Cablethorpe, and then bear round on to the North Road. Jarvis hurried on in front. The wind carried him along with a swiftness that he made little effort to resist. He turned into the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn, more eager than ever to learn any news that might have come by telegraph. Yes; a message from Grimsby had confirmed the rumour. It was the *Seagull*! She had grounded amid the surge a mile and a half straight out to sea off Saltfleet.

Jarvis stood under the archway of the inn, revolving in his mind what course to pursue. No one was better acquainted than he was with the coast between Cablethorpe and Saltfleet. At low tide, when the sea had ebbed almost out of sight of the dunes, over the dead level of the sandy shore, he had often wandered there on Sundays, and on week-days, ever since he was a child. By walking along this coast, though in the teeth of the gale, it might be possible to reach the distressed vessel before the lifeboat. Even at high tide there was never any great depth of water upon the flats. It might be possible to wade through the surf and render assistance in time to the shipwrecked crew.

He resolved to make the attempt. He hastened into the High Street. But at this moment the lifeboat came lumbering through the town drawn by ten horses. It was an inspiring sight. The cavalcade drew up at the 'Bacchus.' More horses were yoked, making a team of sixteen in all; and while the final arrangement for this journey was in course of completion—the arrangement for the conveyance of a huge lifeboat over the highway—Jarvis caught sight of Hettie Beek among

the spectators in the glare of torchlight. If he had been a man wanting in promptness or stability of purpose, the look upon her face would have decided him. He hastened to her side. She looked up, and seeing who it was, clasped his arm with both her hands.

'John! This is terrible.'

'Terrible indeed! But be brave, Hettie,' said Jarvis. 'I will save him, if it's possible.'

'You?'

'Yes; and he told her in a few hurried words what he had resolved upon. Then he went to work, and invited half-a-dozen sturdy fellows of his acquaintance, who quickly agreed to join him in the expedition.

The plan of action was speedily matured. Jarvis obtained a flask of brandy from the 'Bacchus.' The showing of any needless light upon the shore, however, being interdicted by the constabulary, they settled to carry torches with them, to be lighted only in case of real emergency. And now, as the lifeboat-carriage moved ponderously down the High Street, with torch-bearers, launchers, and oil-skinned crews hurrying forward on either side towards the fenland road to Saltfleet, a cheer was raised. Jarvis and his companions joined in the cheer to the echo; and then they started on their independent course along the coast, with an unspoken sense of confidence that they would be the first to reach Saltfleet.

The gale was now blowing almost dead ashore. No such rush and power of wind had been known for many a year. The sand whirled madly about in the darkness, and the sleet and foam tore inland with the blast with unabated fury. The tide still flowed; the muttering of the breakers grew louder and louder; wave upon wave came leaping in, with all the fierceness of a preconcerted invasion. Jarvis, always keeping in front of his companions, waded through the surf, sometimes up to his knees in water; and by this means they escaped the clouds of blinding sand, and could venture occasionally to peer ahead into the night. As their eyes became more accustomed to the darkness they gained glimpses of each other—inky-looking figures plunging through inky waves that had the appearance of immense billows that would presently fall upon them and cast them high and dry upon the dunes.

They had proceeded nearly three miles. Scarcely a word had been spoken. But suddenly Jarvis, looking out to seaward, cried:

'There she is! Hand me a torch—quick!'

He struck a fusee as he spoke. A torch was speedily aflame. Holding it above his head, Jarvis began to wade through the opposing surf straight out to sea. Sometimes struck by a high wave—sometimes in a foot of water when an expended breaker rushed by—Jarvis sturdily faced the storm. Presently a cry for help reached his ear; it seemed to him so near that he stopped

and looked down at his feet, thinking to find some one drowning there. Then he plunged forward, following the voice; and presently he descried a man lying in the surf, clinging to a

plank with both hands. Jarvis bent down; a loud shout escaped him; and then the torch dropped from his hand and fell with a spluttering hiss into the sea.

MODERN PIRATES.

IF proof were wanted that the so-called 'romance' of the sea is not dead, it might be found in the affairs which have been happening off the Riff coast of Morocco during the last twelve months or more. We are apt to assume, save when we receive such forcible and unmistakable reminders as the Riffians have been giving us, that piracy has been completely suppressed. As a simple fact, there are several parts of the world where the profession is held in all honour (among the blood-relations of those who practise it), and where it is pursued, as occasion serves, with considerable profit. To be sure, the pirate of to-day is devoid of many of those picturesque attributes which characterised Blackbeard, Roberts the Dandy, and the other great men of their class. But these were accidental qualities; the thing itself remains, and is likely to endure for many a long day. We may send a gunboat or two against the Riffians and compel them to restrict their operations; but they will assuredly break out again. Piracy is with them a respectable calling, on all-fours with the plundering habits of their brethren in the interior; and if Allah drives vessels on to their coast and gives them victory over unarmed crews, then praise be to Allah, the Merciful, the Good! It is not only during recent years that they have practised their avocation. Does not Hakluyt tell us of frequent encounters between these gentry and the ships of the Levant Company? We have before us as we write a parliamentary return, issued just forty years ago, showing the ravages committed by Riff pirates on English vessels during the preceding decade. We are told of the attack on the *Ruth* in 1846, and the escape of her crew in their boats; of the firing of the *Violet*, after plundering her, in order to prevent H.M.S. *Janus* from recovering her; of the looting of the *Cuthbert Young*, which sustained damage to the extent of £1700; of the wrecking of the *Hymen*, the plundering of her cargo, and the capture of her crew; and of several more instances equally typical. These were not mere coasting schooners, but brigs and barques ranging up to 400 tons—a very fair capacity half-a-century ago.

The Riffians have broken out on several occasions since their Sultan was forced to pay compensation to the amount of £3278 on their behalf in respect of the *Hymen*; and on each occasion when the attentions of warships have become

pressing, they have returned to their fastnesses and defied creation. Their last year's exploits include the capture of the French barque *Prosper Corin*, the Portuguese barque *Rosita Faro*, the Italian barquentine *Fiducia*, and a coaster belonging to Gibraltar; and they kept men from most of these vessels in custody for months. Their position is so strong that, failing the adoption of very stringent measures against them, they can afford to dictate terms of ransom. Last year a Spanish steamer came to the rescue of a Spanish sailing-ship which was being attacked, and succeeded in making prisoners of three of the pirates. French, Portuguese, and Italian cruisers visited the Riff coast in order to negotiate for the release of captives of their several nationalities. The French man-of-war was successful; its commander paid down a lump sum, and carried back with him the skipper of the *Prosper Corin*. The others were less lucky. The pirates refused to give up their prisoners, no matter what their nationality, except in exchange for the Riffians in custody at Tangier and Alhucemas, together with a ransom, the amount of which they chose to fix themselves.

There is something very laughable in the notion of an ironclad making terms with a parcel of seamarauders, as though the latter were a power deserving of all courteous treatment; but the fact is there all the same, and one is compelled almost to admiration for the impudence of the pirates. There is nothing in their method of attack to compel the same appreciation. A large vessel they will not approach. The sort they prefer is the sailing-ship of 200 or 300 tons, with an unarmed crew of ten men or thereabouts. Then, with a wind blowing on to the coast, they are safe. They go out in two or three feluccas, frighten the men by firing flintlocks at them, scramble aboard, and (the crew having run below in the meantime) plunder the cargo, provisions, charts, instruments, and personal effects; sometimes sailing away afterwards without molesting the crew, sometimes taking the whole lot prisoners, and sometimes, again, only enslaving the captain, mate, and boatswain, to be held to ransom. It has been a matter of some surprise to us that no wealthy Englishman—say the gentleman whose yacht was nearly captured last winter while returning home from the Riviera—with a taste for adventure, should have bethought him of fitting out a vessel to attack these pirates. A pirate is the enemy of mankind, and any one who chooses

—and is able—is at full liberty to sink him. Another simple device would be to send a few men-of-war's boats right into the nest of the hornets in order to burn it about their ears, and to break up their boats. But we are not quite sure whether this would be sanctioned by international law; and it is certain that the pirates would retire into the mountains behind, and in revenge murder all their European prisoners.

The Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf is another hotbed of pirates. El Katif is their place of rendezvous, and the kind of boat for which they entertain a particular preference is the pearl-fisher. Every annual report of the Persian Gulf Political Residency has to tell of attacks made by pirates from El Katif, or El Katr, or Wakrah, or Dhaayen upon vessels returning from the pearl-fishery, and of the consequent plunder and invariable loss of life. About the beginning of last year the pirates decided to extend operations towards the end that they might be provided with occupation during the months when pearl-fishing is not being carried on. There is a fairly large trade carried on between Kurrachee and Persian Gulf ports, and they began to attack the vessels engaged in this trade. The *Darbat-pursul* was going to Bussorah for a cargo of dates, and when within a few hours of her destination she was approached by an Arab dhow manned by armed Bedouins, who fired at her. Most of the crew jumped overboard, but were pursued and seized, and two were wounded fatally. Four were taken on board and ordered to point out the place where the money was kept. They replied that they had no money, whereupon their throats were deliberately cut. One of the crew who hid himself in a water-tank was also discovered while the vessel was being searched for loot. He was invited pointedly to give the information required. 'Through fear' he consented, and took the pirates to where the sand-ballast was, and told them if they dug through they would find a bundle containing five thousand rupees. This they did, and, by way of reward to the informer, one of the Arabs slashed him across the shoulder with his knife. Barely a month before this, another Kurrachee coaster was attacked. She was named the *Towkully*, and was bound for El Katif with charcoal, kerosene oil, and rice. In the gulf an Arab *bughara* was seen approaching, and, when she got to within ninety yards of the dingey, opened fire. The crew of the *Towkully* rushed below, and the Arabs came alongside, threw down their guns, and with their daggers, swords, and spears rushed 'like fiends' on to the decks and bawled for the *tindal*, or captain. The *serang*, a relation of the *tindal*, came forward, and said he was not on board. Then they laid hold of him, and demanded all the money that was in the vessel. He told a pardonable lie: he said there was none. On hearing this they attacked him savagely and dragged him to the cabin where the boxes were

kept. Two of them, by way of prelude, stabbed him with a dagger in the neck and the back. He pleaded for mercy, and then made over all the money he had in his box—namely, fifty-two rupees; but, not satisfied that the *serang* was telling the truth, three of the pirates stabbed him again, and told him to look sharp and produce more money, as well as to open all the boxes in the cabin. By this time the unfortunate man was covered from head to foot with blood, which oozed from the wounds he received. The boxes were broken open; and while the pirates were helping themselves to the contents, the *serang* quietly crept forward and lay there weltering in blood. When the pirates had boarded the vessel, three of the crew jumped overboard and held on to ropes hanging over the side. The rest were hiding. They were dragged out one by one and ordered to turn up their money and possessions. If they said they had none, they were slashed with swords or daggers and kicked about. The *malum*, or pilot, was one of those who jumped overboard. He was brought on deck, and because he said he had no money, was cut at with a sword and wounded in the neck. He was also 'struck with a dagger on the shoulder and back, and was left on deck almost dead.' The cook was stabbed to the heart. The *tindal*, who was given away by the informer, was also asked to produce his money, but 'replying in the negative, he was seized by the leg and flung off the poop to the deck. The shock was so great that the poor man's ears started bleeding. He pleaded for mercy in consideration of his old age (he was over fifty), but in return received a dagger-thrust in his chest, from which he bled profusely, and was left for dead.' Finding that they had exhausted all means of extorting more money from the crew of the *Towkully*, the pirates set to and stripped the vessel of her sails and other gear, and took possession of the cooking utensils, clothing, and other sundries. They also removed a number of cases of kerosene oil, and helped themselves to a large quantity of rice, filling their little craft, which was of about twenty tons burden, with as much as they could stow away with safety. Then they sailed off.

Thanks to the energetic measures adopted some years ago, piracy is in a fair way to being exterminated in Atcheen (Sumatra) and in the Java Sea generally; but the case of the *Pegu*, which occurred in 1896, shows that the Atcheenese at least are quite capable, with a little license allowed, of becoming a serious nuisance again. In July this steamer, which is owned in Penang, left that port for Edie and Olehle. Lloyd's agent, who may be regarded as a reliable witness, stated that at Edie she took on board as passengers a party of some ten Atcheenese and one woman. The men were searched for arms—a customary precaution—but none were found, and it is supposed these were all concealed on the woman's

person. At about 7 p.m. on the 9th, when the master, Captain Henry Ross, and the chief engineer, Cragie, were at dinner in the saloon, they were set upon, without warning, by these men. The engineer, though wounded by stabs about the body and arms, managed to escape, and barricaded himself in the engine-room. Captain Ross also escaped from the saloon, but in trying to gain the bridge was overtaken and stabbed fatally. The Atcheenese then turned their attention to the rest of the crew, killed the mate and steersman on the bridge and five of the native passengers, while five other passengers jumped overboard and were drowned. In addition to these, fourteen others of the crew and passengers were more or less severely wounded. Having gained possession of the ship in this way, the Atcheenese proceeded to plunder the strong-room, securing about 15,000 dollars in coin, with which they made good their escape in the ship's boats, landing on the Atcheen coast near Simpang Olim. After they had left, the engineer took charge of the ship again, steered her out to sea until daylight, and then made for Teluk Semawe, where the Dutch authorities took possession.

It has been asserted that China was a fond mother of pirates before the first pyramid was built; but, whether or no, it is certain that in no part of the world has this profession flourished during the present century as on the coast of China. The piratical centres, now as half-a-century ago, are Amoy and Macao. Methods have changed somewhat in the past few years, by reason of the vigilance of the armed cruisers that prowl around. The pirates no longer cruise boldly in the open seas; but, learning from their spies that a richly-laden junk will leave a given place on a given date, they plan to intercept the vessel in the shoal-water near the coast, or in some river or arm of the sea where meddlers are not likely to be found. They succeed in rifling the cargo, and if necessary in scuttling the ship, in perhaps two cases out of six. We hear of these occurrences only when the vessel attacked happens to be British. Not more than four years ago a steamer brought into Shanghai the crew of a small barque which had been rifled by pirates and set on fire. The story told by the captain was that he was in his cabin, when he heard a scuffle on deck, and went up to inquire the cause. The native boat-swain told him that a junk was right upon them. He stooped down to look from underneath the mainsail, when he received a blow on the head with an iron bar from one of the native crew, who were in league with the pirates. Then he was stabbed in the back with a Java dagger. Turning round to confront his assailant, he saw the latter was making another blow at him. This he warded off with the loss of a finger, and then found himself stabbed a second time from behind. The captain was totally unprepared for a piratical onslaught, and was unarmed. By the time he

managed to reach his cabin he had sixteen wounds, which bled very profusely, in various parts of the body. No one of them was individually severe, but the sum total was enough to make him faint. When he recovered consciousness he discovered that the ship was on fire, and he was driven out of his cabin by the fumes. The pirates had rifled the ship of everything worth stealing, and were making off in their junk with some members of the barque's crew. He crawled along the deck as far as the main hatch, and slipped over the dead body of the first mate. Other corpses were scattered about. The few men left endeavoured to put out the flames. The captain was too ill even to give orders. He lay on the quarter-deck for a whole day in a semi-comatose state. It was found necessary to take to the boats in the end; and, as luck would have it, the survivors of the tragedy were picked up in a few hours by a passing steamer.

A year ago a man sent to one of the London dailies an account of his experiences among Chinese pirates. He had shipped at Rangoon on board a steamer bound for Shanghai. 'When I signed,' he wrote, 'she was flying Jardine's flag at the main, but I believe she carried the ensign of every nation and half the house flags of the world in her signal locker. An opium-smuggler I was prepared to find her; but that her chief business on the waters was piracy of the vilest sort, and unredeemed by a glint of romance, came upon me certainly as a revelation. We attacked no ships, so far as I know; but, handled with marvellous skill and knowledge of the intricate coast navigation, she would run in after nightfall among rocks and banks where one would expect a sampan to take the bottom, while shrieks, flames, the report of firearms, and clash of steel would testify to the descent of my delectable shipmates upon one or other of the numerous fishing villages which fringe the shores of the China seas.' After about four months of this life, the narrator contrived to escape by drugging the drink of his companions.

The most remarkable of recent cases of piracy in the China seas is that of the *Namoa*, which occurred in 1890. The *Namoa* left Hong-kong for Chinese wayports with two hundred and fifty Chinese and five European passengers. Among the Chinese were a number who were returning from the Straits Settlements with the savings of years in their possession. This fact became known to the desperadoes of Hong-kong, who thereupon planned a very daring scheme. About fifty of them booked for the passage. The steamer had been at sea for only five hours, and the passengers were seated at tiffin, when, at a given signal, the pirates, who were all armed with revolvers and cutlasses, rushed on deck, and, dividing themselves into four parties, covered the officers' and engineers' quarters in the fore-part of the ship, the engine-room, the bridge, and the saloon respectively. Then they commenced firing and throwing stink-

pots into the saloon. The first officer was shot in the arm, and the second taken prisoner. Captain Pocock was then ordered to come up from below, and was killed just as he was reaching the deck. The passengers were ordered up and subjected to every variety of fiendish insult that the ingenuity of their captors could devise. They were searched, and every article of value taken from them; and then officers and passengers—eleven in all—were shut up in the cabin, not being allowed to open the window for ventilation. Having now charge

of the ship, the pirates commenced the work of plunder, and steered for Pinghoi. Arrived at that place, two blasts were blown, and six junks came off, into which the plunder was transferred. Then the pirates sat down on deck and had a hearty meal, taking care before leaving to damage all the bonts and the windlass, and to draw the firs. Then the Europeans burst open the cabin and returned as speedily as possible to Hong-kong. Thirty-four of the pirates were afterwards beheaded at Kowloon.

THE GOLDEN BARS.

CHAPTER IV.

HARVEY found the lantern, ignited it, and passed out into the night. He was strangely excited. There was a certain feasibility about Dame Druce's story which made his thoughts play round it in a mad game of hope such as he had rarely known. With firm, long strides he passed across the yard to the gate. Here a voice arrested him.

'Is that you, Godfrey?'

He looked upwards to one of the windows.

'Yes, dear. Why are you not asleep?'

'I have been reading. Then the storm came, and I have been sitting here, watching the lightning. What are you doing? It is so very late!'

'I'm just having a last look round, Gracie. I shall be with you shortly. Retire and go to sleep, dear; it is not good for you to be sitting up at this hour.'

'I'll stay just a little longer, Godfrey. The lightning has interested me, you see; and the play of it is so beautiful. I never saw the jagged outline of the Priory look to such advantage. But, do you know, Godfrey, I saw a figure just now mounting the bank. It looked like'—

The pleasant voice ceased abruptly.

'Yes; whom was he like?'

'Perhaps I ought not to have mentioned the matter. You do so hate poor Mark.'

'Oh Mark! Didn't some one tell me he was in London? Why should he have such a hankering after rabbits the minute he returns?'

Two or three moments' silence. A nasty suspicion had entered Harvey's quick brain. What was Ruthwood doing half a mile from a burrow? Had he caught something from old Jacob's garrulity? Had he too been theorising?

'Are you sure it was he?'

'I'm afraid so, dear. He is so very tall one could hardly mistake him.'

'Well, I can't bother about him to-night. Let him poach on, the rascal! Bye, bye, dear one; I shall be with you quite soon.'

Mrs Harvey made some inaudible reply and drew the casement to. But unawares to him she still sat on, watching the flash and flicker and tremble of the lightning; but wondering also why she should feel such restlessness and uneasiness upon her since the appearance and going of her husband. There was nothing untoward in the incident. He had been writing or reading in his room, and, farmer-like, was taking a last glance round in order to sleep on a satisfied pillow. Yet, why these pestilent fears? She threw open the casement and listened for some sound from the stillness. Her pulse hastened its beatings; she could hear, faintly but surely, the rhythmic footsteps of Godfrey. A moment more and she knew that his face was turned from Springfields. The next flare of light showed her the answer. She saw, for a second time that night, a human figure ascending the mount to the Priory. It was her husband. She owned the fact with a pinch of the heart which made her almost scream. What could Godfrey be thinking of to go forth alone in the centre of night to cross a man of Mark's size and strength? She knew the meeting could not be pacific; she knew Mark's fiendish temper once it was aroused; she knew of her husband's unreasoning hatred for him. With tense eyes she waited for further light from the heavens. The seconds seemed hours. At last came a blaze which lit up all the country-side. She started up, rubbing her dazzled eyes. She had seen the two men struggling on the crown of the mount. Turning swiftly, she slipped on some further clothing, and, with a glance at her child, hastened from the room, and then from the house, before she had had time to realise what she was doing.

The still vivid lightning left intervals of such darkness that at times she had almost to grope her way; but the lane was familiar to her, and in a very few minutes she came to the stone stile which led to the ruins. She hurried up the bank, pausing midway to listen. Beyond the thud, thud within her, she could hear two things

—the hard breathing of combatants striving, and the faint murmuring, as it seemed, of a distant weir. Reaching the ruins, she sent through the darkness a cry to her husband. He made no answer, and she could define no sound save that in the distance, which she knew now to be the roar of the night-mall to London.

‘Godfrey! Godfrey!’

She stood a moment listening. All her ears caught was a crash of broken timber to the right of her. She turned and ran, bathed in quivering light. She came to a halt in inky darkness, but knowing all that had happened. The two men, in their struggling, had fallen against the old, weather-beaten fencing, and rolled down into the cutting below.

She leant on to the fencing and cried into the blackness. The roar of the train seemed to beat back all her words. The sky lit up once again, and her eyes widened with horror. The two men in the darkness had fallen across the line. Mark had somehow got Godfrey under, and was holding him at arm’s-length with such a power of muscle that his victim, in such a position, was absolutely helpless. Mark’s face was turned to the nearing train; yet he made no movement, and his profile was a devil’s, smiling.

‘Mark! Mark! Spare him! Think of me and my child! Mark!—oh, my God!’

She crushed her hands to her face, stumbling away from the cutting; then she fell forward and passed into sudden oblivion.

For minutes she lay so, unconscious of everything—of the thunder of the passing train; of the tremble of the ground beneath her; of the blessed return of silence; of the figure kneeling beside her, with his passionate words and caresses; of the coming again of stillness and solitude; till a second figure appeared, kneeling where the first had been, gently calling her name. She heard it, and her fingers tightened over the hand which was chafing hers. Another moment and she was in her husband’s arms, knowing where she was, and sobbing with joy at being there.

‘It was a near miss, my Gracie. He heard your voice through his madness—you have excellent lungs, by the way—and hurled me aside just as the train was upon us. The fall stunned me. When I revived he was by my side. He had fallen back between the rails, and allowed the train to pass over him. Seeing that no damage was done, he gruffly told me where you were, tacked up the bank, and disappeared. Now are you able to— But what is this pinned on to your dress? Let me strike a match.’

The tiny light displayed a piece of paper fastened at her bosom; it was old and faded—a blank leaf, seemingly, from some book—a book which had once been Silas Harvey’s, for there was his name in the corner. But what was all that beneath it? Godfrey started: could anything be more plain? It were patent to the intelligence of

a ploughboy. There was the guide to the old yeoman’s money! But how had Ruthwood come by it? Why had he left it thus? Was it an act of mockery, or was the treasure still there, hidden in the walls of the refectory? All this in the brief life of a lucifer. Harvey threw it away.

‘What is it, Godfrey? What does the paper say?’

In the wild race of his thoughts the question was hardly heard. He turned to her.

‘Grace, this Ruthwood loved you once, did he not?—loves you now? He lost his head to-night; but would he in cold blood do you a wrong?’

‘Never, Godfrey!’

‘It is there, then.’

‘What is there?’

‘The lantern—quite extinguished. It shall shine again, and lead us on to fortune.’

He lit the lantern with shaking hands, and without further word passed into the ruined refectory, Grace following him wonderingly. Going up to the south-east corner, where the remains of the massive wall rose not more than four feet from the ground, Harvey, after careful use of his bull’s-eye, began to remove the loose stones and debris which happened there to fill up the space between the two faces of the wall. Holding the light, Grace waited, plying questions in vain. Godfrey worked on till he had made a hole more than a foot deep; then, one after another, he drew forth ten small roughly-moulded bars, which he carefully stacked on the sward at his feet. He stopped at last, breathing hard.

‘Let the eye of the lantern see what is there, my Gracie; then tell me what you see.’

‘But what are they, dear? They look like brass. How came they in such a place?’

‘A crazy old man put them there before you and I were born. You see more than a thousand pounds in gold, with not a sovereign to show for it. One way, isn’t it, of harbouring up riches on earth? Only a man in a melting mood could have done it. I thank you, Silas Harvey!’

Godfrey looked as if he could have cut a caper. Grace glanced from him to the gold and back again.

‘Silas Harvey! But I thought he was robbed of all he possessed!’

‘Of everything, save those golden bars, which might have been robbed from us all if you hadn’t sent the devil fleeing this night from the soul of Mark Ruthwood. My Grace, you have saved both my life and my fortune. Two hours ago I was a ruined man. Now—’

‘Oh Godfrey, and you never told me!’

‘Dear, I could not; the courage wasn’t in me. But don’t look so hurt, for, after all, my cowardice has spared you much unhappiness at a time when you could least have borne it. Now give me a kiss, and slip down home at once. I want Hugh and one of my handbags without waste of a

single minute. Meanwhile I'll wait here, and bless my wife and Silas Harvey.'

Some three weeks afterwards Grace Harvey was sitting in the parlour of Springfields at work on a tiny garment, glancing over it at moments to the cradle on the near side of the lively fire. It was afternoon time, and all was very still. But presently there came a knock at the door. It was Sally. She announced a caller—a Mr Smithson. She was told to show him in. A little man entered, carrying a gold-headed cane and a black wideawake hat—a man seemingly of some substance, but with the air of a stranger upon him.

'Mrs Harvey, I believe?'

'Yes, Mr Smithson. I was asked to see you in case my husband should be out. Your telegram struck us both as rather curious. Sit down, pray.'

He sat down.

'Possibly it would; but reading in the paper this morning of the discovery in your house of a quantity of old gold, I wired you that I would call to-day respecting it. I am a dealer in old coins, jewels, curios, &c.—this is my card, ma'am: 61B High Holborn. The purpose of my visit is to ask you to kindly hold back the coins at your banker's for a day or two. I may be able to take them from you at a somewhat higher figure than their nominal value.'

Grace looked up surprised.

'May I ask how the treasure came to be discovered?' continued the dealer in coins.

'Yes; it was found behind some old wainscoting upstairs. We have been making a door from one room to another. In sovereigns and guineas there are more than a thousand pieces.'

Mr Smithson worked his hands.

'If I can only find him out! I speak, ma'am, of my—eh—client. His lawyer was not in when I called; the clerk was at the courts, and the office-boy knew nothing. But it is only a question of a few hours. The case is somewhat peculiar, ma'am,' continued Mr Smithson. 'A relative of my client had suddenly come into a large fortune; and, quitting the country shortly afterwards, left some twelve hundred pounds to my client in

discharge of a debt due to his father, now deceased. My client, on hearing of the deposit, wished, rather than transfer the sum to the bank of his own district, to draw the money there and then, but in gold, and *old* gold. They could not do it. Asked—Do I bore you, ma'am?'

'No, no; pray go on.'

'Asked if they could get it for him, they replied no. All called in years ago. They, however, referred him to me. He came to me. I could only offer him some ninety pieces—spade-aces, ma'am. Could I get them for him? He would give me two hundred pounds if I could get them for him. I could not promise. He began to fume, talking to himself about a proud fool who would fling money back at him if he offered it, and much else. Finally he left me, still fuming. Now, as I think he would hardly do the strange thing he said he would, I have run down to-day for the purpose I have mentioned.'

'And what was the strange thing?'

'That he would melt the money down into bars.'

The listener turned white as milk.

'What was his name?' she asked huskily.

'Ruthwood.'

Grace caught at her throat.

'Shall I ring the bell, ma'am? You look unwell.'

'No, no! I shall be better in a moment. I fear the fire is too hot for me.'

She moved away to the window; then, after a short silence, she turned to the dealer.

'Mr Smithson, your errand has been fruitless. Mr Ruthwood is dead. He was found drowned three weeks ago.'

'You knew him, then?' said the other, with dropped jaw.

'Yes; I knew him.'

He rose; she also, with swimming eyes. Oh Mark! why had he loved her so? Why that generous subterfuge to save their fallen fortunes? And old Silas's gold so near discovery!

'And his money?' asked the dealer. 'What became of that?'

With averted face she gave the trembling answer: 'He left it in *Golden Bars*.'

CLIFF AND SHORE IN THE INNER HEBRIDES.

I.

THE islands of the Inner and Outer Hebrides have attractions peculiarly their own. With a milder climate and a softer air than many other parts of the British Isles, they would be pleasant enough places to dwell in all the year round if there were not so many recurring storms of wind and rain nurtured in

that broad and restless Atlantic which beats upon their shores. Yet these ocean-born storms add, withal, an invigorating quality to that western air, and they keep the hills and valleys of an emerald green which is rivalled nowhere else within these northern lands but on this Atlantic seaboard. And when the sun does shine, and the skies are clear and blue, and the seas roll in white-crested

to the yellow strands, the dark mist-clouds and the sweeping 'rack' are forgot. To these must be added another compensation for life in the Hebrides: they are under the influence, or supposed influence, of the Gulf Stream, and frost and snow, in their severer forms at least, do not come often or stay long.

My friend's man-servant, who was a Lowlander and an excellent and intelligent fellow, declined to believe this. He said to me one day:

'They tell me here, they Hielan' folk, Mr Smith, that they have a stream of hot water comes over frae America in the winter-time and keeps them warm! But I'm no gaun ta believe that! They need watchin', they folk, when they tell ye stories like that.'

Yet, despite all that is said about it, the weather is always one of the most important factors in the life of these British Isles.

If this be so generally, it is no less specially true of our Western Archipelago. The hills are to-day ablaze with the purple of the heather, now in its fullest bloom; the slopes and glens are clad in a verdure kept almost perennially green by the moisture of many days; while sky and sea are alike of the deepest blue, and the warmth of the unclouded sun is tempered by a fresh breeze from the ocean, which stretches and vanishes westward in a seemingly 'boundless contiguity of space.'

A drive of something like twelve miles in the early morning, under such pleasurable conditions, has brought us to the western front of one of these islands. We are going to spend a long day in exploring its cliffs and shores, and to take what we can get in the way of shooting there. Our gillie, who knows every foot of the ground, every cave which holds the fast and wary blue-rock pigeon—the *biset* of the French, the *columba* or rock-dove of Virgil—as well as the favourite rocks for seals on the small island lying seaward, is waiting for us at the little farm-place where we have to put up our dogcart and good-going bay. A walk of a mile over the moor and fringe of hill-land brings us to the low-lying bluffs overlooking the shore. Our first objective is the Seal Island, across the sound, and by-and-by we may get to the high cliffs and caves to the northward for blue-rocks, with perhaps the chance of some duck in the sheltered bays lying here and there along the coast.

We had hoped to have Archie Macdonald the crofter's boat for our expedition, but inquiries and a search for the boat itself reveal the disappointing facts that *he* is away to the hay-lifting, while 'she' is lying high and dry on the beach. Yet fickle fortune is not to desert us altogether this time, for we discover a handy little yawl or skiff lying snugly in a sheltered creek, and Duncan, our *fidus Achates*, is despatched on an embassy to find the owners. His errand is, ere long, accomplished. The owners are found, and prove to be

two fishermen from the little village lying round the far-off point, come to look after their lobster-creeels which are set off the shore. For a 'consideration' they are willing to take us anywhere and to do anything. They know the coast well, and are at least *quasi* sportsmen, and, perhaps, a little in the way of poachers too—dark-skinned, strong, rough, wild-looking men, who have gone down to the sea in ships and sailed, we discover, in their time, on far other seas than these.

The wind is blowing gently off the shore, and in the little bay beside us the sea is calm, but the Atlantic swell is heaving and the breakers, shining white in the sun, are booming over the rocks far out. The surf, indeed, seems inexplicably heavy for this calm summer weather and off-shore breezes, and it is doubtful if, after all, we shall manage to shoot pigeons from the sea to-day.

But the yawl has her mast stepped, her balyards rove, and her brown mainsail bent and ready to hoist, and so we get on board with our impedimenta of guns and luncheon-baskets, and the necessary but very moderate flask of 'Laga-Voulin' for ourselves and the men.

We must wait a bit, however, before we can cast off from our moorings, for Duncan has yet to reconnoitre the Seal Island with his glass from the cliff overhead. His search seems a prolonged one, but at last he signals that he has seen something, and very soon he rejoins us in the boat. On a low, flat rock near the water's edge there were, he thought, at least seven or eight seals lying basking in the sun. But it would be necessary to land on the far end of the island and to make a long stalk over the rocks to reach them. We sail quietly out of the bay; then the sail is lowered and the boat is pulled gently across to our landing-point, the guns and rifle are slipped out of their cases, and some wired cartridges with No. 1 shot are taken for the guns. We move as quietly as possible over the slippery rocks and tangle, but the footing is difficult and treacherous. By-and-by, however, we reach a small plateau of rock sparsely covered with sea-grass. It seems a favourable point from which to discover the exact whereabouts of the seals. Duncan therefore crawls forward and peers steadily, with his cap off, over the top of the rock. An almost imperceptible signal from him, and we also make our way thither. About 500 yards off, or perhaps more, we can make out distinctly three large seals lying on the flat rock—the rest are invisible. Two of those we see are gray seals, and the third a common brown one. We might make them out better with the glass, for the sun is shining on them; but we are afraid they might catch a reflection from it and become alarmed.

The question is now how we are to reach them? Ere long we discover that a ledge of

rocks rises to our left, and seems to lead straight up behind them, forming at low-tide on the other side, which we can gain by a slight detour, a small natural valley or protected way. Nothing could have been better. If they do not hear or 'wind' us, it seems practically certain that we can get within easy shot of them unseen. But it is a somewhat trying stalk. The rocks are sharp, broken, jagged, and in places slippery, and we have to get through some pools of sea-water, choked with seaweed, up to our knees. We had not, however, gone more than a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards when we were suddenly stopped by a hoarse screaming overhead, and we saw that three great black-backed gulls were much disturbed in spirit by our advent. A look of extreme vexation crept over Duncan's usually immobile face. 'These black sinners,' he whispered, 'will spoil all. They will alarm them sure enough.' We waited patiently, hoping the birds would quieten down or go away; but it was of no use, so we must needs go on, somewhat despairingly I fear, and hoping against hope. Looking cautiously, ere we started again, over a ledge of rock, I saw in the distance the flash of a broad fin raised in the air, and a moment afterwards what seemed to be one of the large gray seals take the water; but he was much too far off, and the movement in any case altogether too sudden, to shoot. The gulls had done for us of a certainty, as, many a time before, a covey of grouse or blackgame, disturbed by the stalker and flying over the herd of deer feeding, without thought of danger, in the corrie below, has sent up every head and spoiled all chance of a successful stalk. Surely a vain quest for us now!

Nevertheless we crept on in the hope that some of the other seals farther down the slope had not taken fright and might still be found there. But, alas! when we reached the end of our stalk and came in sight of the flat rock, wet, hot, and tired with our labours, every one of them had gone! No; there is one big fellow swimming some two hundred yards off, or possibly less, and evidently not in any special alarm. The rifle is brought quickly forward and sighted for one hundred and fifty yards. We wait patiently till he swims towards us; then, as he raises his head out of the water and looks about him with the fatal curiosity of his race, we take a careful aim, leaning the left arm on a ledge of rock, and fire. There is a great commotion, the water is lashed into a foam, and we think we have got him and rush breathlessly across the rocks, while Duncan runs up to a higher peak and signals wildly for the boat. But all to no purpose. Where the seal was all is now still, and there is no sign of him on the top of the water. Unfortunately, as so often happens, he has gone down in the deep water. Better, much better to have left him alone, even though, as was the case, we saw no more seals that day.

II.

But it is now wearing towards noon, and we have still much to do. While we are waiting for the boat to come round for us I take a beat over the seaward side of the little island, and am lucky enough to get a mallard-drake, in fine plumage, and a rock-rabbit or two. The mallard, which rises from a rocky pool on the margin of the cliff, is got far out by a long shot with a No. 1 wired-cartridge, which happens to be in the left barrel, and he falls over the cliff on to a ledge of rock below; but by dint of some scrambling we manage to retrieve him.

We have no sooner got into our boat, however, hoisted our sail, and set her head for the cliffs on the mainland, than we sight a flight of duck, which come down to feed in a little bay on the west side of the island, and we make them out with the help of our glass to be the common brown eider (*Somateria Molissima*). It is too good a chance to be lost, and so we lower our sail again and row cautiously towards the bay. As they rise they give us excellent shots, and we bag three; while another comes down, but is only winged, and gets away with the rest over a reef of rocks, where, unhappily, we cannot follow them.

Once more the sail is hoisted, and with a freshening breeze we run for the land. As we speed along we have one or two flying shots at solitary male eider, but the heel of the boat now and then and the 'way' on her is too much for accurate shooting. Then my friend gets a 'seart' (cormorant) with a good shot, and a guillemot. The former only is deemed edible by our native friends, and by-and-by we pick up one or two more for them, but another of the latter species which comes across our bows we of course leave untouched.

Before we make for the pigeon-caves the lobster-creels lying off the shore have to be hauled. We find them by their cork floats and lines, set some distance apart, and, heaving to, we take up six of them in all. They contain three lobsters, one a very fine specimen, and several large red crabs; so we add two other species to our already fairly 'mixed' bag. In a small lagoon close by the cliff, what we make out to be a black scoter-duck, comparatively rare on these coasts at this time of year, and a male eider added to the list end our tale of the sea. All the rest of our time we must now devote to the rock-pigeons—those little blue-and-white birds the velocity of whose flight is so striking, whose feathers are so thick and shot-resisting for their size, and whose *habitat* embraces three continents, for they are found in Asia and Africa as well as in Europe.

It is, as yet, too early in the afternoon to make much of a bag, for the birds are mostly feeding on the distant corn-fields and stubble, and will not return to the eaves until the

evening begins to fall and the sun is hastening towards its setting. But we are sure to find some at home if the surf will but allow us to reach the mouths of the caves, or at least to get within shooting distance.

The scenery of the coast is as bold and wild as any one could desire. The cliffs rise sheer from the sea, often in broken, rugged, and fantastic forms, while detached pinnacles and masses of rock stand out as sentinels in the foreground. Here there is an amphitheatre of rock, broken in places by vast clefts and crevices; there a promontory of serrated peaks stretching out from a background of cliff, while dashing ceaselessly against them all are the blue-and-white waves of that ever-turbulent sea. And yet not all blue and white; for, as the sunlight strikes the curl of a wave ere it breaks, there shines through it a pale, clear, iridescent green, cool and inviting.

But we have approached the first cave, and the boat is backed carefully into the little cove below, while a sharp lookout is kept at the bow for sunken rocks, and the boat-hook is ready to 'fend' her off the cliffs if we should be carried too near them by a wave. The rifle, a good old double-barrelled muzzle-loader, is carefully loaded and capped, and we stand ready as Duncan fires it high up towards the roof of the cave. A couple of pigeons come out like rockets—my friend gets one of them as he flies to the right, and we pick him up afterwards on a ledge of rock where he fell. I 'dust' some feathers from the other as he shoots high to the left; but he carries on over a lofty ridge of rocks and is lost to sight. Then, just as I have reloaded, another pigeon flies in, and I get him fairly as he circles round towards a shelf of rock high up at the mouth of the cave, and he comes down, bumping from ledge to ledge. One of our fisher boatmen jumps nimbly ashore on to a rocky, wave-washed promontory and clambers up the cliff a bit, from whence, with the aid of a long landing-net, he cleverly retrieves the bird.

From the next cave the pigeons come out high, and out of shot, and it was therefore a blank; but the third one gave us two more birds, although one fell on a high ledge, from which we could not recover it. As we are leaving the cove my friend has a beautiful high crossing shot, and as the bird falls in the water we row up quickly and pull him out with the landing-net. Now there is another high up, but he carries on into a cleft, and all that is left of him to us are some feathers floating lightly in the air.

But now the day is passing apace, and we must make haste to reach the two best caves round that point, upon which the breakers are booming and rolling heavily. The boat heels to the swell, and we seem to be drawing it fine in working round these outlying rocks, where there is an ugly, jumbling sea. But our fishermen-crew know their

way well, and we are in safe enough hands. The point is weathered, but the surf will not allow us, alas! to get near enough to the big cave, and it has to be given up. The other seems also difficult of approach, for the swell is much heavier here; but we decide to risk it, for we see pigeons flying about the mouth of the cave, circling and balancing themselves in graceful flight. The boat is taken carefully in and steadied as far as possible; but the shooting promises to be anything but easy. The rifle is again brought into requisition, and out fly a small cloud of pigeons, like a flight of English arrows at Bannockburn or Flodden. One is got as he shoots across our bows, and another as he alights for a moment on a pinnacle of rock high above us; then two more from among some late-departing birds—two misses as a wave heaves us upward, and we are done.

Only one cave remains, and it must always be shot from the landward side and from the top of the cliff. The boat is therefore put about, the sail run up, and we bowl along quickly, round the point again, but farther out to sea this time; then one tack, and we are running up into a long, sandy bay, with deep water almost to the shore. The guns and game, the lobsters and crabs, are unshipped, the necessary *largesse* bestowed, and we bid farewell to our crew, and, heavily laden with our mixed bag, we clamber up the long, grassy defile which leads to the pass by which we are to gain the top of the cliff. As we go we add a couple of those tawny-coloured but excellent rock-rabbits to our game-list, and then struggle on, hot and breathless, up the steep pass—a stiff bit of climbing enough towards the end of a long day's shooting. But at last the top is gained, and we throw ourselves, and the game-bags, on the fresh green grass for a brief respite and a comforting cigarette. Near at hand now is our last cave, and we approach it cautiously. It is a case of hands and knees as we creep silently up to the edge of the cliff, then throw ourselves prostrate on the sward, and peer eagerly over. No pigeons are visible. We must wait a little and send Duncan round to the shore with the rifle.

It is a delightful and charming scene which spreads before us—a fitting close to a varied and interesting day by sea and land. The sun is sloping rapidly towards the west; the sea outside looks calm from this height, and is unbroken by a single sail. To our left rises a cliff-peak of wonderful outline, and clothed to the top, on the landward side, with the most vivid emerald green; while behind it, away to the far south-west, and at a seemingly vast distance, are the bold but misty shapes of the coasts of Antrim and Donegal. To the right, looking purple and white in the clear autumn light, are the Jura Mountains; and, farther to the north, the curved and serrated peaks of Mull—Ben More, Craig-Ben, and the rest. Our guns are resting on a natural battlement of turf, which hides us completely from the entrance to the cave

immediately below us. In front is a narrow gorge, with sides smooth as if cut with a knife, yet starred here and there with bright little clumps of lichen and moss and fresh green ferns, nestling in the crannies. It runs out seaward, contracting as it goes, until it seems a mere slit in the cliffs, through which we can catch a vision of the blue sea. There, down in its dark depths, at least a hundred and fifty feet below us, the waves are booming and churning themselves into white foam as they wash the foot of the cliff; while above us are the glories of a western sky at sunset, and the fresh, vitalising air of the Atlantic. As the accessories given by Nature to a comparatively innocent form of the pursuit of pleasure, I do not think they could have been beaten anywhere. But now Duncan's rifle is heard, and, sure enough, in come two pigeons flying for their lives. One goes down, falling on an easily accessible grassy slope to the left; the other, as he comes straight at us, is badly missed. 'No doubt the easiest way, anyhow,' as Duncan says afterwards. But here is a third, which turns as he scents or sees us. From him the white feathers thickly fly, and he towers and falls sheer down into the yawning gulf beneath and is never seen again, for to retrieve him from thence is practically an impossibility. Then there is a lull, again followed ere long by the renewed crack of the gillie's rifle, and again two or three pigeons fly in. We let them come nearer this time. The first two are hard hit, but we only get one of them—the other carrying on over the cliff seaward. Then two more in a final drive are added to the bag, and the tale is complete—twelve pigeons retrieved, besides at least three shot and lost, six duck, five rock-rabbits, and an assortment of scart, guillemot, lobsters, and crabs, certainly yield us a variety sufficient to please the most fastidious. It was not, perhaps, in numbers a great bag for two guns—far from it; but it must be remembered that it was got under distinctly difficult conditions, and that to shoot from a rocking boat, and retrieve one's game from such broken ground, beetling cliffs, and troubled waters, is easier to write about than to do.

The crescent moon is rising in the east as we start on our twelve miles' drive homeward through the dark brown moors; and we are not sorry to find a late dinner awaiting us on our arrival, tired and hungry, at the comfortable, old-fashioned, whitewashed inn. And so ended my first day amid the attractive cliffs, the seals, and the blue-rocks of the Inner Hebrides—a red-letter day, in many respects, in my little annals of sport. For, after all, it is not in a surfeit of the good things of life that true pleasure is to be found, but in a simple and moderate measure of success, fairly and, perchance, hardly won. And so with sport. A day's 'wild' shooting, with, perhaps, its very moderate yet varied results, got withal in the midst of magnificent surroundings, is often worth

three of the ordinary and conventional type, with their set accompaniments and almost mathematical pre-calculations as to results. Rather for me at least, much rather, a day when

The blackcock rises in the air,
The grouse sweeps o'er the hill,
The wild-duck haunts the sedgy pool,
The morn breaks bright and still.

AN AUTUMN EVENING.

How lingers long the sunset light
This exquisite and tender night!

I see above the tree-tops swim
The little moon's light, slender rim,

A very thread—a trace of light—
The wheeling swallow hides in flight,

Withdrawn to westward, fair and far,
Shines one lit lamp—the evening star.

I hear the little children gay
Who shout across the fields in play,

And by the wayside well I hear
A girl's voice singing sweet and clear.

Oh! many mortals near and far
Look westward to yon sinking star,

With hearts o'erbrimmed with joy divine,
And hearts all desolate like mine.

Yon slight thread of the southern moon
Shall round to bright perfection soon.

Yon sunset star, so far withdrawn,
Be glorious leader of the dawn.

And long, long ages sound hereafter
Love's happy song and childhood's laughter

For me, how hard it is to think
That stars return not when they sink.

How far, how dwindled seems the day
When I was of the children's play!

That song how far, how lost, how dear,
That from a stranger's lips I hear!

Love set: what rises?—in the gray
Still twilight slides my life away.

But yet I hear in other voices
Echoes of life that still rejoices.

I do not grudge them any gladness
Before the silence and the sadness.

Soon all alike, laid very low,
Shall neither hear nor feel nor know;

Nor watch the hastening even star
Plunge in the west so fair, so far.

A. S. FALCONER.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

MODERN HOTELS.



STORY is told of a brilliant idea struck out by an enterprising Frenchman named Baubier, who found himself the sole proprietor of a small shanty and a single blanket on the ground upon which the original Chicago had just struck its roots, and to which people were flocking in such numbers that shelter could not be got for love nor money. M. Baubier, with ready wit, determined to start an hotel. He charged three dollars a night for the privilege of camping down upon the floor of his shanty and the use of his blanket—money in advance. As soon as the first weary prospector gave evidence by his hearty snoring that he was safely asleep, the landlord gently drew off the blanket and took in another customer on the same terms. He afterwards boasted that the patrons of his hotel thus were able to get seven 'sleeps' out of that one blanket the first night.

That little incident would make an interesting and convenient starting-point for a history of the development of the modern hotel. One could hardly wish for anything more rudimentary; to trace the growth of that germinal idea up to its big houses of Saratoga or New York, or such establishments as the 'Hotel Cecil' in London and the 'Adelphi' in Liverpool, would be very striking. Somewhere probably about half-way up the scale would be the house of entertainment of which Dr Johnson was wont to speak so highly. 'There is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness has been produced as by a good tavern or inn,' said the dogmatic Doctor. What the great man's opinion would have been about the modern representative of his tavern or inn it would be extremely interesting to hear if he could revisit the glimpses of the moon.

There is at least as much difference between the best of taverns of Dr Johnson's day and the best of modern hotels as there was between M. Baubier's shanty and the Doctor's favourite resort. The modern first-class hotel has very little in

common with the homely snuggeries in which our grandfathers and great-grandfathers were wont to find 'good accommodation for man and beast.' It is not a house; it is a vast palace of the most sumptuous and splendid character, with resources and appliances, organisation and services, almost as varied if not so extensive as those of a modern city, and presenting almost as many social grades.

One of the earliest of the modern Brobdingnagian hotels was set up on the Broadway of New York. It was foredoomed to ignominious failure; it never could be half-filled; it was impossible it could pay; there were not, and there never could be, travellers enough to keep it going; the foolhardy speculators would lose all their money. So the critics said. But the Americans took to the thing at once—in a great measure because of the extreme difficulty of getting and keeping and managing domestic servants; and many of them liked it so well that they went and lived in the hotel altogether. They found that they were relieved of all the troubles of housekeeping, were absolutely free to dispose of themselves and their time as they thought proper, knew exactly what their expenses were, and above all had no worries about servants. A good many on this side the Atlantic have regularly adopted hotel life; but the idea has not 'caught on' with us to the same extent, and we have not, therefore, so many big hotels. New York and some of the American watering-places still take the lead in point of size; but the latest of the London hotels have been rapidly overtaking them. One of the most recently established of them—the Hotel Cecil—is just now completing its original design, and when this completion has been effected it will not be far behind the largest in existence. In point of internal splendour and completeness of equipment it is already quite equal to the finest in the world.

These modern palaces are marvels of artificial life; and if one can only adopt Iago's suggestion—liberally interpreted—and put money in his purse,

he may live in one of them probably with less grit and friction in his wheels of life and fewer crumpled rose-leaves on his couch than under any other circumstances known to this troublesome world of ours. To know how wonderful an organisation a modern large hotel is, one needs, of course, to see much more than comes under his notice as a visitor. In some of the largest, indeed, to see the whole of it one would have to begin a good way off. The vast caravanserai just alluded to, for instance, situated in central London, has out in the suburbs its own model farm, where it raises its own poultry, runs its own dairy, and grows flowers and shrubs and other things for decorative purposes, to the value, it is said, of something like £8000 a year—flowers and greenery alone! These things come jogging in by wagon and cart into a sort of goods' dépôt down in the basement of the vast pile towering up no less than twelve stories overhead. It is a strange, bewildering region of utilitarian ugliness—this nether world stretching away right and left from that stony roadway by which the vehicles come in; and one who has dropped down into it from the light and glittering splendour above will hardly fail to have Dante's Inferno suggested to his thoughts as he moves about the gloomy corridors, scales the bare, bleak, stone staircases, and passes from one to the other of the departments in which the Sybarites up in the realms above are being provided for. As one moves about the intricate labyrinth of kitchens and pantries, stores and engine-rooms, workshops and bakeries, he catches glimpses of a sort of under-world counterpart of the Elysium above—plainly furnished but comfortable sitting-rooms and dining-rooms and smoking-rooms, in which—not all together, for social status in this under-world is quite as real, if not as varied, as in the realms above—the various ranks of the staff are resting and getting a little social intercourse, or taking their meals at large and seemingly well-spread tables. Luncheon is over with the hotel visitors, the great building is comparatively deserted, and for two or three brief hours the rush and hurry of business has died down and there is a breathing space for all—cooks and waiters and messengers, café attendants, interpreters, and so on. There seems to be quite a large secondary hotel down here, for in one capacity or another there are said to be between six and seven hundred people employed about the establishment, and, as large numbers of them have to get their meals on the premises, and a good many live here altogether, the catering for the staff and the management of the house arrangements for them constitute no inconsiderable part of the business of any large hotel.

The kitchen is, of course, the largest department of the service. The *chef* is a most important personage, and in the largest hotels he may have a hundred men under his command, and he will have, such appliances as Dr Johnson

and the worthy and witty people who dined with him at the 'Mitre' or the 'Cheshire Cheese' could never have dreamed of. Indeed, the whole of the lower regions of a large modern hotel—and the upper regions even more—would give the estimable Doctor many an uncomfortable twinge of a sense of the uncanny and perhaps some suspicion of witchcraft. A door is thrown open, and the touching of an electric switch sets in motion revolving refrigerators for making ice-cream. Another door, heavily barred, is thrown back, and one steps into a chamber hung round with joints of meat, and in which is a range of iron pipes all aglitter with hoar-frost and icicles at midsummer. There is a similar cold store for fish and another for poultry, and there is an ice-well in which the electric light brilliantly illuminates tons of artificially produced ice. A little farther on is some very fine machinery, flashing with miniature lightning and generating electricity for various machines and for the electric-lighting of the whole huge pile. Then comes a wet and steaming range of subterranean apartments in which the finest of modern machines are doing the washing for the whole establishment. Table-cloths and serviettes, bed-linen and personal clothing, anything and everything requiring washing may be dealt with here—washed, wrung, dried, starched, ironed, or mangled—at the rate of perhaps three or four thousand articles a day. Although all the main processes are performed by machinery, there may be five-and-twenty or thirty people employed in this laundry. Here is a fine bakery, with all the newest appliances for making all the bread required by the hotel; a pastry-cook's department in which all the cakes and tarts and other nick-nacks are made; and there is a separate confectioner's department seeming to be chiefly employed in making sugary embellishments of the most marvellous variety for the dinner-tables in the sumptuous halls above. One long room is all ablaze with the glitter of plate, and thirty men are regularly employed for fourteen hours a day in keeping it bright. Knife-cleaning is done by rotary machines, but boot-cleaning is still a matter of hand-labour, though boot-cleaning machines have been introduced, and probably in some hotels are used. Some of the most extensive, however, still do the work by hand-labour. There may be for a large hotel twenty of these men who go on duty at twelve o'clock at night, and polish away steadily all the night through. A big hotel also does its own printing, and it has its carpenters' and upholsterers' shop, and must necessarily always have on its premises a brigade of perhaps a dozen or fifteen firemen.

And now from the under-world of labour let us betake ourselves to the modern substitute for the magician's flying carpet—the hydraulic lift, that is to say. In the largest of the London

hotels there are sixteen of these flying boxes that go with their brilliant electric light flashing up and down from roof to cellar and from cellar to roof with a celerity that would fairly have astounded the company at the 'Cheshire Cheese.' When Johnson and his friends assembled there, no such hydraulic power was known, and, in the best of taverns, people—if they were sober—went up to bed by the good old-fashioned process of walking upstairs, and if they were not sober enough to walk they had to be carried. One hardly knows whether the stiff-necked Doctor would have taken kindly to the innovation, or whether on being invited to step into the lift he would have stubbornly gibbed. 'Sir,' we can imagine him blurting out, 'it's a mere pandering to laziness and a tempting of Providence. I'll go upstairs.'

Every luxury that money can buy or science invent or art produce may be found in a great modern hotel—marble staircases, handsomely furnished corridors, magnificent saloons and halls, smoking-rooms and billiard-rooms, bath and reading rooms, libraries and private studies and drawing-rooms, and great concert and entertainment halls. Nearly every room has its telephone; there is a telegraph office and a post office, and the leading agencies pour in their piping-hot news from all the ends of the earth, just as

they do into the newspaper offices and the leading clubs all over the kingdom. A touch of a button will summon an attendant who will take orders for an opera-box or a carriage-and-pair, for the daintiest foods or the choicest wines. It is a fairy scene of luxury and wealth, of light and glitter and colour, of palms and flowers, of mirrors and pictures and statuary; and as one passes out from the splendid vestibule he finds a large gathering of men and women of various nationalities lounging in cushioned chairs around little tables in the open air, quietly chatting, watching arrivals and departures, smoking cigarettes and cigars and sipping tea and coffee, and listening to the delicious strains of the hotel band. Wealth and art and taste and science, and the highest powers of organisation, have all combined here to afford the most luxurious and indulgent conditions of existence; and yet, as one looks round upon the faces of the guests, one feels that four out of five of them would, if they were questioned, and answered quite frankly, agree that after all 'there is no place like home.' The writer of this article has at different times stayed in many of the best hotels of the kingdom; but he has always been delighted to get home, and he has never altogether overcome some feeling of compassion for the poor rich people who always live in hotels.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER VIII.—CAPTAIN TUDWAY'S MONEY.



WHEN another morning dawned with a red flush upon the waves there was still no abatement of the gale. Appalling ravages, occasioned by this almost unprecedented storm, were already being reported. Everywhere wreckage could be seen upon the shores cast up by a mighty wind and tide. A fishing-smack had been lost off Scarborough; a steamship had gone down off Flamborough Head, with all hands; a sloop, while endeavouring to enter Grimsby harbour, had struck the pier with a terrific crash and had almost instantly sunk. Such was the disastrous news from every point. The catastrophes were innumerable and heart-rending. In more than one seaport town, and far inland, great damage had been done. Houses had been stripped, their gable-ends blown in, and the streets strewn with debris. The wreck of the *Seagull*, a schooner that had drifted on to the flats off Saltfleet, was talked about for miles round.

This red dawn, looking in at John's garret window, found him lying upon a chair-bed with a thick rug wrapped about him. He was fast

asleep. But as the daylight increased, and the wind roared in the warehouse roof overhead, he began to stir. Suddenly he started and awoke. He stared about him with an air of bewilderment until his eyes rested upon his bed, which stood beside the chair-bed. He raised himself on his elbow and bent forward. Some one was lying there—some one with bruised limbs and lacerated face—who met his look with a look of gratitude.

'Jarvis—my good friend'—

'Keep quiet, Tudway,' John interposed. 'You mustn't talk, you know. Those were the doctor's orders, and'—

'One word. Were none of 'em rescued after all?'

'None. You're the only one saved.'

'And if it hadn't been for you, my friend'—

'Tut!'

'If it hadn't been for you,' Tudway persisted, 'I should have been drowned too.'

Yes; Jarvis had saved his life. He had saved the life of the man whom Hettie loved. More than that; for in the look that Hettie had given him when he had expressed his resolve to go to the assistance of the wrecked crew, Jarvis had

discovered her love for Tudway was deeper than she had herself realised until then. It had been fully awakened. And now words of gratitude had come from Tudway. It was hard enough to bear from Hettie. He did not need their gratitude. He had simply done his duty: he had saved a life, and by so doing he had given Hettie all the happiness in his power; and the mere thought of this, though he despaired for his own happiness, was in itself a reward.

Before night there came a lull in the storm; and on the following morning at daybreak, like a dying giant, it had given vent to a final groan and was dead.

That evening Tudway, though severely buffeted from head to foot while escaping from the wreck, was sufficiently recovered to hobble downstairs. With the aid of a thick stick and John's stout arm he contrived to join Hettie and Ruth at their fireside.

'Won't you tell us now,' said Ruth, turning to Tudway, 'how the *Seagull* got aground? We have been longing to hear your account of the storm; haven't we, Hettie?'

'Indeed we have,' was Hettie's reply.

'Well,' Tudway commenced, 'it's not a long yarn. We were within a short distance of Newcastle, not long after midnight, when the wind freshened. The gale struck us suddenly and took away all our sails except the mizzen. We began to drift—drifted back on to this coast, where we cast our anchor. Our other anchor had got entangled in the steering gear, and we couldn't get it to go. Then we started showing signals of distress. All through the night we kept a fire going on deck. We drifted for three or four hours before we struck in the sand. When we struck we all took to the rigging. We had no boats—they had both been smashed; the sea broke them up and washed them away. Then the mast went, and threw us all into the water. I started to swim ashore. The others swam towards the wreckage. Jarvis can tell you the rest.'

He held out his hand to John; so did Hettie; but Ruth kept shyly in the background. If Jarvis had glanced up at that moment, and had seen the look on Ruth's face, he would have learned her woman's secret. The girl's eyes brimmed over with tears. If she had ventured to express a word of gratitude by word or action, her love would have assuredly been betrayed.

Some days went by. One afternoon, finding himself alone with Hettie in the little parlour, Tudway broached the subject that had been uppermost in his mind since the night upon which he had been saved from the wreck.

'Hettie,' said he as he lay upon the sofa smoking a cigarette in a luxurious, invalided fashion, 'you've not forgotten our last talk in Uncle Tudway's cabin?'

'It was an eventful day,' said Hettie thoughtfully. 'It was a day of disasters. Ruth and I have been in trouble ever since.'

'I know it, Hettie. My good friend Jarvis,' said Tudway, 'has told me everything. We will speak of that presently. Tell me, Hettie, first of all, do you remember your promise?'

'My promise, Ted?'

'Yes, dear; the promise you gave as we sat together,' said he. 'I was to have the answer when I came back. Hettie, the night upon which I swam ashore, cut with ropes and numbed with the cold, your name was on my lips. The thought of you encouraged me to fight for dear life. I determined to come back to you in spite of the storm. Don't tell me you are still in doubt. You will be my wife now, dear; won't you?'

He had thrown away his cigarette, and as he spoke he held out his hand.

'I'm in doubt no longer,' said she. 'I love you.'

Tudway drew her eagerly towards him. Then she went on: 'But you don't know, Ted,' said she confidently, with an earnest uplifted face, 'what serious doubts I have had about my love. But the moment that Ruth told me of the rumour that was spreading—the rumour that the *Seagull* was in distress off Saltfleet—I knew that I loved you. It's strange, isn't it? Ruth was quick to read my thoughts. She gave one look into my face. I feared you were in danger: I realised then, and only then, what your love was to me.'

They were silent for a while. Then Tudway lit another cigarette, and said: 'Hettie, I do believe Uncle Tudway's dream is coming true.'

'What dream?'

'The dream of his life,' said Tudway; 'the dream that he told me he has had a thousand times while aboard the *Nancy*. Do you remember my telling you, as we sat in his cabin, how I had often seen him smoking his pipe there when the *Nancy* came into port? That's when the dream mostly took a hold upon him—as he owed to me when I saw him last—the dream of seeing me a married man, and'——

'You'll marry a penniless girl, Ted,' Hettie interposed, 'if you marry me. But I warned you; didn't I?'

'Stop! Wait till you know all,' said Tudway.

He then related how the great desire of his uncle's life had always been, though he had spoken of it to no one, that Hettie should marry his nephew, and that this nephew should become a partner in Beek & Son's house; that he was, moreover, willing and wealthy enough to purchase a share in the timber business.

'Too late,' said Hettie.

'Too late? Now, Hettie,' said Tudway, 'listen to me. You're a woman of business, and you're not in the least likely to misunderstand. I've had a talk with Jarvis. He has told me all about Burtenshaw's threat.'

'What threat? He has told me nothing.'

'The threat to foreclose the day after to-morrow unless'—

'What?'

'Now, Hettie, the three thousand pounds must be found at once,' Tudway resumed. 'Captain Tudway is the man to apply to; and before Burtenshaw has had time to turn round, my dear, we shall have sailed out of his reach.'

Hettie looked brightened at the prospect.

'If it were possible,' said she. Then she added: 'But you won't be well enough to travel for days to come.'

'I've thought of that. The man to talk this matter over with my uncle—the man to put the whole business lucidly before him—is Jarvis. And what's more, Hettie, our friend John has agreed to go to London, if you've no objection, by the first train to-morrow morning.'

Jarvis had been left no choice. He had approved of Tudway's suggestion unhesitatingly. The chance of winning Hettie was gone; but the chance of befriending her and of saving the fortunes of Beck & Son was still held out. For her sake he was still willing to serve the firm. The impetus that had impelled him—the forlorn hope of capturing Hettie Beck—was no longer a computed force in his determined course of action. He had mounted to the highest rungs of the ladder, but the prize had slipped from his grasp. He valued his position only so far as it was useful to Hettie. If he had consulted his own inclination at this moment, as a weak and selfish nature would unquestionably have done, Jarvis never would have undertaken to go on this errand. He would have abandoned Hettie—abandoned her to others when she needed him most. John Jarvis had been almost prepared, in his desperate love for Hettie, to sell his very soul to Lawyer Burtenshaw. He was now eager to throw over the lawyer, and negotiate with Captain Tudway for a partnership in Beck & Son—a partnership for the man who had unwittingly supplanted him in the girl's affections.

Jarvis was hourly expected at Nelson Square. Captain Tudway's nephew had prepared the way with an eulogistic letter which instantly secured for Beck's manager the heartiest welcome. On the afternoon of John's visit Captain Tudway forgot all about his nap.

'Come in, John—come in,' sang out the old captain in a jovial voice when Jarvis knocked at the door of his snug cabin on the second floor. 'You're the lad for me! What cheer?' He had known John for years. He grasped his hand in both his own; and the muscular force with which he did it—as Jarvis afterwards remarked—completely upset the captain's favourite theory that he was 'breaking up.'

'Saved Ed'ard's life, did ye? Why, bless my eyes!' said Uncle Tudway as soon as Jarvis had taken a seat beside the hearth, 'let's drink his

health. Saved Ed'ard's life. Ay, ay! Thank ye, my lad. Thank yer, kindly.'

There were glasses on the table all ready at hand; the brass kettle was singing cheerily on the hob; the grog was speedily mixed; and then the toast was drunk with great fervour—at least on the part of the captain. If Jarvis showed less enthusiasm than Uncle Tudway, that was surely excusable.

It would have been impossible to find a better delegate than Jarvis. By saving young Tudway's life he had done most to help the captain to realise his dream. Uncle Tudway fully conceived the situation—knew, indeed, that Jarvis loved Hettie, and appreciated his heroism all the more.

'Now for the yarn,' the captain insisted, putting down his empty glass. 'We'll go into other business presently. First and foremost, John, let's hear how you came to save my neevy's life.'

Captain Tudway had received every detail about the wreck in a letter from his nephew. He had read an account of the inquest upon those of the poor fellows belonging to the *Seagull* who had been washed ashore at Saltfleet; but he listened to all that Jarvis recounted concerning the catastrophe with as much interest as if it were new to him from first to last. 'Now, John,' said he when Jarvis had brought his 'yarn' to a conclusion, 'I'll tell you what I'm prepared to do. Is that your bag?'

The captain pointed to a brown leathern bag with J. J. upon it, on the floor at John's side.

'Yes, that's mine.'

Captain Tudway rose from his chair and limped across to his sea-chest. This chest he unlocked and brought out three packets. 'One thousand—two thousand—three thousand,' said he, as he cast them one after the other upon the table, and rang out of them a loud musical clink of gold; 'three thousand pounds. Isn't that the sum you need?'

'Yes. But'—

'Stop a bit,' Captain Tudway interposed, with one of his knowing winks. 'Pay the old pirate in hard cash to-morrow morning and be quit of him. Do you understand?'

Jarvis nodded and dropped the packets into his bag.

'Now mark my words,' the captain went on. 'I refuse to enter into any further negotiations with a view to buying a share in this ship-breaking business while Gabriel Beck is connected with the concern. He has nearly sunk the craft as it is; he's a danger to every one aboard; and we must be rid of him straight-way.'

Jarvis readily acquiesced.

'We must buy him out,' said Captain Tudway, 'if needs be; and then we'll launch the house of Tudway & Jarvis, ship-breakers at Cablethorpe,

as soon as you please. Does that sound like business?'

John declared that it sounded very like business; and presently, having drunk one glass more, he took his leave.

Uncle Tudway was in a jovial mood to-night. All his doubts were gone. He had hoarded up his money wisely after all. The captain plunged his hands into the capacious pockets of his pea-coat, and drew forth his pipe, his negrohead tobacco, and his box of matches; and then he brewed himself a stiff glass of hot grog. He smilingly contemplated the insinuating mixture through a cloud of smoke. The thought that he had already parted with some of his gold in an appropriate manner pleased him mightily; any dread that he had had of becoming a miser was dismissed from his mind, and he began to regard the 'dream of his life' as something as good as realised.

When Jarvis reached Willoughby Junction on his way home it was ten o'clock. The local train to Cablethorpe was due at the Junction at ten-thirty. Fatigued with his long journey—he had risen before daybreak that morning—he pondered

drowsily over the situation. It never occurred to him, nor would it have occurred to him in his most wakeful moments, that he was anything of a hero. And yet he had not only saved young Tudway's life, he had sacrificed his own happiness without a murmur; he had given up all thoughts of Hettie Beek; and he had now taken the first step towards the reconstruction of the house at a time when—had he followed his own inclination—to have turned his back upon Cablethorpe would have pleased him best.

Still, while brooding over the irony of his own fate, one reflection brought an exultant smile to John's face. Gabriel Beek, the man who had opposed him since boyhood, would no longer stand in his way. The thought that he might return, and assert his legitimate right to take the helm, had filled Jarvis with dread. Captain Tudway's ultimatum had removed that dread at last.

At this moment, however, Jarvis happened to look up. By the light of a bright lamp in the station he saw a threatening face at the waiting-room window. It was the face of Gabriel Beek.

(To be continued.)

THE OXFORD OF SCOTLAND.

THE 'Gray City by the Northern Sea' has no doubt changed somewhat since Henry Cockburn, with his almost unrivalled power of graphically describing what came under his own eye, photographed it more than half-a-century ago in his *Journal*: 'It is the asylum of repose—a city of refuge for those who can't live in the country, but wish for as little town as possible. All is in unison with the ruins, the still surviving edifices, the academical institutions, and the past history of the place. On the whole it is the best Pompeii in Scotland. If the professors and the youths be not learned and studious it is their own fault. They have everything to excite ambition—books, tranquillity, and old inspiration. If anything more were needed, they have it in their extensive links, their singular rocks, their miles of the most admirable dry sand. There cannot be better sea-walks. The prospects are not very good, except, perhaps, on such a day as I had—a day of absolute calmness and brightness; when every distant object glitters, and the horizon of the ocean in its landless quarter trembles in light, and white sea-birds stand on one leg on the warm rocks, and the water drags itself out in long unbroken waves as if it was playing with the beautiful bays. But, though tranquillity is deeply impressed on the whole place, the inhabitants are not solitary. On the contrary, among themselves they are very social. Except those

who choose to study, they are all idle; and having all a competency, they are exactly the sort of people who can be gregarious without remorse, and are allured into parties by the necessity of keeping awake. They have a local pleasure of their own which is as much the staple of St Andrews as old colleges and churches. This is golfing, which is there not a mere pastime, but a business and a passion, and has for ages been so. This pursuit draws many a middle-aged gentleman, whose stomach requires exercise and his purse cheap pleasure, to reside there with his family. It is the established recreation of all the learning and all the dignity of the town.'

No doubt St Andrews has in certain social and other respects been considerably altered since Cockburn wrote. It has, in particular, become an important watering-place, frequented during the months of July, August, and September by visitors from all parts of England as well as of Scotland. It may still be 'an asylum of repose' during the winter and early spring; but the monster hotels that have sprung up have taken away its character as a Pompeii, while, as for the staple industry, it was well said by a humorous writer in the *Cornhill Magazine* more than twenty years ago: 'Of the visitors who frequent it, some come with the avowed intention of doing nothing but play golf, while others basely represent to their wives and families that they come for the sake of bracing air and sea-bathing.'

Golf, being played steadily all the year round

by the St Andrews residents—who are never quite happy except when the visitors are away—is still in a sense the staple industry of the place. But its supremacy as such has been threatened during late years by education. Of course 'the college of the scarlet gown' has always had its attraction for a limited number of students. Even in its darkest hour, when, owing to such agricultural depression as has now rendered imperative an appeal to the English public on behalf of Cambridge, the incomes of certain of its professors fell below that of a second-class teacher in a Board school, the number of students never was less than one hundred and fifty. Then a local benefactor of the name of Bell gave St Andrews, as he gave other towns in Fifeshire, a secondary school styled, from his connection with India, the Madras College, and which has always been well attended. Finally, the salubrity of the St Andrews climate, along with its other charms, has led to the establishment of an unprecedentedly large number of private schools for both boys and girls. The institutions for boys have secured a high reputation in the very different fields of scholarship and athletics, while it will never be forgotten of one of the schools for girls, St Leonard's College, that a pupil, Miss Ramsay, now Mrs Butler and wife of the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, carried off the blue ribbon of classical scholarship in that university.

There can be no question that all St Andrews requires to become an almost ideal educational city or capital is the completion or perfection of its university, the rendering of it the central and supporting arch of the whole.

That a very great deal has been done in this direction, whoever takes the trouble to compare the present condition of the university—which, as the chance-visitor sees, combines modern comfort with mediæval charm—with the descriptions given of it three-quarters of a century or even fifty years ago will at once allow. One of Scotland's almost innumerable University Commissions investigated St Andrews in 1827. It found St Mary's College—which now suggests Oxford more readily than anything else in Scotland, 'wretched and dilapidated.' Even the newer buildings were in such a state that one of the professors 'was ashamed when people came to see the colleges.' And that charming essayist, the late Sir John Skelton, so much better known as Shirley, has testified that when Dr Robert Leo, the well-known minister of Greyfriars in Edinburgh, professor and ecclesiastical 'innovator,' studied in St Andrews, about 1821, he found it a dark, sombre, ruinous, ill-lighted, badly-paved, old-fashioned, old-mannered, secluded place in which 'old-fashioned professors and old-fashioned ladies looked after keen-eyed, threadbare students, who, in red and ragged gowns, like the early Edinburgh Reviewers, cultivated the Muses on a little oatmeal!' One has but to look upon that picture and on this, to contrast—as even the casual visitor can easily do—the St

Andrews of Dr Lee's day with the St Andrews of the present time, to see what a change has come over the old university, in spite of great difficulties, the complete story of which has yet to be told.

Writing four years ago, with a full knowledge not only of his first college but of Oxford, Mr Andrew Lang thus describes the changes that have taken place in what he loves, not less than Mr Matthew Arnold loved, as 'mine own St Andrews:' 'The old college buildings have been removed, except that tall block which contains Dr Chalmers's classroom and the little museum with Kennedy's maces and the silver arrows, with the medals of Argyll and Montrose. The new buildings are adequate and airy; they contain no rooms for students, who live in the town. The old house next the college, with the saint in a niche of the tower, is the Union; it answers the purposes of the Union at Oxford and Cambridge. There is dinner in hall daily, a thing not usual in Scotch universities. The numbers of the students are as high as they ever have been, except perhaps in the years of Dr Chalmers's attractions. The university has received a considerable bequest from an Australian benefactor; additional chairs have been founded, and there is a kind of unholy alliance or amalgamation with Dundee College.' In these last words Mr Lang makes a playful allusion to a dispute—in many respects unfortunate—which has led to much heart-burning and even to a good deal of litigation, and which has been occasioned by attempts to unite a college which was founded about a quarter of a century ago in Dundee by an enlightened and wealthy lady—Miss Baxter—with the old university. It does not fall within the scope of the present article to make any comment upon the merits or demerits of this quarrel, which threatened at one time to destroy the usefulness of St Andrews. Happily, however, there is now a prospect of its being brought to an amicable close, and of the two colleges being united after a fashion which will make the reorganised university one of the best-equipped institutions of the kind in the country.

As things are, and in spite of disputes, St Andrews has, owing partly to the generosity of parliament and partly to the gratitude of wealthy sons like Mr Berry, the Australian benefactor alluded to by Mr Lang, who left his *alma mater* no less a sum than £100,000, recently taken a new lease of life. The incomes of the professors have been so very greatly increased during the past twenty years, partly by such benefactions as that of Mr Berry, and partly by parliamentary grant and other direct or indirect State subvention, that the occupant of a St Andrews chair has now almost no inducement to leave it. In none of the other universities are students so well off for special endowment as are the undergraduates of St Andrews; each of them enjoys—or can enjoy if he chooses—a bursary that is never lower than £10, and may even rise to £30, a year. St Andrews

also promises to become the favourite university for girls in Scotland. Even if it should not become in all respects the Scottish Oxford, it is already recognised as the Scottish Girton. The salubrity of the town, its natural beauty, and its quaint historical charm have attracted to it female students from all parts of the country ever since the Scottish Universities Act of 1889 threw open the national colleges to women, and still more since a hall of residence was built for their accommodation. Such, indeed, has been the rush of girls to St Andrews during the past nine years that it alone of the Scottish universities shows an increase of matriculations, the institution of a 'stiff' preliminary examination having very considerably reduced the number of the entrants at Aberdeen, Glasgow, and above all Edinburgh. Leaving Dundee College out of consideration, the students' roll for last winter session was 236—a larger attendance than has ever been attained within living memory. One of the leading academic tendencies of the time—a tendency of which not a little is certain to be heard in the future—is towards the encouragement of what is known as

'post-graduate research,' or studies pursued by men who have completed their university careers and taken the degree of Master of Arts, but desire to greatly amplify their knowledge of subjects that have a special fascination for them. No doubt an 'endowment of research' in this sense is required by all the Scottish universities—an endowment which will take the form of Scholarships and Fellowships of much greater value than the few prizes of the kind at present in existence. The Scholars or Fellows of the future, however, will probably find St Andrews, with its quietude, its historical memories, and its links, still presided over by the veteran Tom Morris, and still inviting to healthy but not too violent exercise, more congenial to them than busy cities like Edinburgh and Glasgow. In a quarter of a century St Andrews will celebrate the quinqucentenary of its existence. If by that time it can boast of 350 or 400 students in all, male and female, engaged in undergraduate study or post-graduate research, it will have fulfilled its mission, and realised the dream of its founders, by becoming in truth, and not merely in name, the Oxford of Scotland.

ARCADES AMBO.

By HENRY MARTLEY.

MY elder sister Monica possesses a mission in life. What its exact nature may be I do not know, nor, I think, does she; but it has always been an axiom in the family that the mission exists. At present it has taken no more extended form than desultory visiting in the village and teaching in the Sunday school. At times she has hankered either for work among the heathen or for hospital nursing; but the visions are both so attractive that she has been unable to decide between them, apart from such minor difficulties as an inevitable parental veto and the practical discomforts of either pursuit. The result is that her village ministrations are inadequate, and she is compelled to fill up her time with domestic well-doing. Personally I did not suffer much from her improving influence. While I was still in the schoolroom, I fancy that I did regard her with awe, and mother on grave occasions used to send her to talk seriously to me, much as I had been dosed for physical ailments in earlier days. For quite ten minutes afterwards I would be seized with exalted ambitions to be worthy of the place in life which Monica explained a woman ought to fill.

Lately, however, I had been emancipated, and Monica in despair had ceased even to upbraid me with that unutterably wistful gaze of hers. Good advice had become a thing of the past some time before the gaze. I am sure I was to blame for neglecting such excellent opportunities, but a face

like a Madonna's and an aureole of golden hair are thrown away on a younger sister. Besides, she had found plenty of raw material without requisitioning me. I had almost lost count of the number of young men whose nobler feelings she had roused. Why she chose them almost exclusively as her proselytes was a question which uncharitable people might debate. Of course young men may need improvement more than women or elderly men; but at the same time I think they should have been made to understand the nature of the proceedings more clearly than they did. In the course of becoming high-souled they had a habit of proposing to Monica, and she was compelled to dismiss them with an air of benediction. For a day or two she would go about with the martyred air of the misunderstood. They departed with an awe-stricken expression, as though they had laughed in church.

Most of the young men were comparatively strangers, including a large percentage of curates. I do not say this by way of innuendo, but simply to explain why I was annoyed when Monica applied herself to the task of improving George Ingram. We had known Mr Ingram as a boy; and, though we had not seen much of him for some years, he was still, when after his father's death he settled down near us, a nice boy who needed no improvement. Monica, however, took him in hand. What was the precise form of spiritual malady which she discovered in him I

did not know, but the regeneration went its usual course. For a month or so he was much interested in the discussion of the higher idealities in their application to himself. Then the violet eyes and wavy hair took effect, and he began to display the accustomed symptoms of misunderstanding Monica. The time seemed ripe for the parting benediction. What puzzled me was that it was so long in coming. Perhaps he was an unusually interesting patient; but—I admit it ought not to have occurred to me—the other young men had not been exactly eligible, and Mr Ingram was a young man whom more worldly people than Monica might have regarded as materially acceptable.

Matters were in this condition when George passed the lawn one afternoon after a protracted interview with Monica. He was looking unutterably dejected when he appeared, and it was not until he had nearly reached the gate that he sighted me. Then, after a moment's hesitation, he turned back.

'Miss Kitty,' he began dismally, 'do you mind my talking to you?'

'I have no very violent objection,' I said.

'Well,' he went on, 'you understand what it's about, of course?'

'You look,' I said, 'as if it was cholera—very bad cholera. Is it?'

'Please don't laugh at me. It's—well, you must have noticed—it's Monica—Miss Ellis, I mean,' he explained with a gulp.

'You're—er——?' I said.

'Yes,' he answered; 'and of course it's quite hopeless, quite useless. It is quite hopeless, isn't it, Miss Kitty?'

'I haven't any idea,' I replied. 'Was that what you came to ask me about?'

'I thought you might know,' he said. 'You can't tell me at all?'

'Not in the least.'

'She's—she's an angel,' he remarked.

'Several people have said that,' I agreed.

'Of course they have,' he said enthusiastically, 'and I'm—what do you think of me candidly, Miss Kitty?'

'Well, candidly,' I replied, 'I think you're a fool.'

'A fool? Why do you say that?' he asked, with some indignation. It is annoying to be called a fool when you want to be considered an irredeemable castaway.

'Mooncalf perhaps expresses it better,' I said.

'Mooncalf?' he exclaimed.

'Yes,' I observed; 'a young creature who moons about.'

'I thought perhaps you'd be nice about it,' he murmured, preparing to go.

'So I am,' I said. 'I'm telling you some useful home-truths. Doesn't even Monica do that too?'

'Yes,' he admitted; 'but then, you see, she

sympathises with one. She's wonderfully sympathetic.'

'She is,' I agreed again; 'she's susceptible to almost any emotion.'

'What do you mean?' he inquired.

'Will you listen to my advice—as it's meant?' I asked.

'Yes,' he said doubtfully.

'Well,' I went on, 'do you know the strongest emotion in an angel—like Monica?'

'Religion?' he suggested reverentially.

'No—jealousy,' I said.

'Jealousy?' he answered in a puzzled way. 'Do you really mean if I—er—er——?'

'Exactly,' I said. 'There have been several moon-calves before you, and mooning doesn't pay.'

'Several others?' he exclaimed with some warmth.

'A whole drove of them,' I said, 'and they've come and gone.'

'Several, have there? But it sounds so preposterous. Do you really think that she'd mind if I and some other girl——? She wouldn't mind, I expect, would she? I don't see how she could. If she didn't care at all for me it wouldn't matter to her.'

'No,' I said; 'but it might make her care for you. I also am a woman—though a little lower than the angels. It's good advice, but you can take it or leave it.'

'If it really was any good,' he faltered; 'but I couldn't—after all she's done for me. It would be dishonourable.'

'Very well,' I said.

'But, Miss Kitty,' he began again, 'do you really think it might make some difference?'

'Oh, young man, young man,' I exclaimed with impatience, 'does a girl care most for a man when he's making little of himself to her, or when another girl's making much of him?'

'Thank you very much,' he said, 'but I couldn't. Thank you all the same. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye,' I answered.

'And where's the other girl?' he went on, still waiting irresolutely.

'Oh, you must find her yourself,' I said.

'There are so few girls about here,' he suggested.

'There are several nice girls.'

'But the other girl—what would she think?' he asked.

'Of course she'd have to know,' I explained.

'But I couldn't possibly tell another girl,' he said, aghast.

'All right,' I replied. 'It was merely a suggestion thrown out, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.'

He took his leave once more, and was almost out of sight when he stopped, and then walked slowly back again.

'Miss Kitty,' he faltered, 'I'm afraid I may make you angry'—

'You certainly will if you go on digging up the tennis ground with your stick,' I said.

'I'm sorry. I wasn't thinking,' he went on. 'It seems such a strange request; but would a sister do for the other girl?'

'If you can't find any one better, perhaps she might,' I replied.

'You see,' he explained, 'it would be so convenient. You know all about it, and understand everything, and all that.'

'Yes, I should be very convenient,' I agreed.

'I should be awfully obliged to you,' he explained; 'and would you—mind very much?'

'It's not a very pleasant position,' I suggested. 'However, under the circumstances, perhaps I might do it.'

'Of course,' he agreed, 'it will be very painful for both of us; but you really do think it's a good plan, do you?'

'Oh, do it or don't,' I snapped in disgust.

'I think I will try it,' he said slowly. 'When shall we begin?'

'Really,' I protested, 'you are the most irritating man I ever had the misfortune to come across. Have you never—let us say—talked pleasantly to a girl before?'

'Oh, of course,' he said sadly; 'but it came naturally then. That was before I knew Monica so well. You won't mind my calling her Monica, will you?'

'Not in the least,' I said. 'Have you decided when and how you intend to start?'

'What would you suggest?' he inquired fannereally.

'Mr Ingram,' I said indignantly, getting up from my chair, 'look at me carefully. You see me. Very well. Now let me tell you that there are several other people who would be only too glad to be in your position; and if you go on vapouring much longer I shall say good-bye, and leave you to the misery of your own company.'

'It's very difficult,' he murmured.

'Rubbish,' I said shortly, moving away. 'Good-bye. Find some other girl.'

'I'm so sorry, Miss Kitty,' he pleaded, coming after me. 'May I take you out in the punt?'

'You might have ten minutes ago,' I said, 'but you can't now. The river and a glorious evening—and me—and you tell me it's difficult. Go and write a sonnet.'

'Do be merciful, Miss Kitty,' he urged, with quite a respectable show of feeling. 'I'm not generally such a bear. Please come.'

After some demur I went. For some time he persisted in babbling of Monica, and I listened, wishing to find out what crime he had committed to merit regeneration. Apparently it consisted in nothing more heinous than neglected opportunities and a wasted life. 'Life is real, life is earnest,' had been the text of the sermon, and poor Mr Ingram's ideas of existence had been knocked to

pieces. To a healthy-minded man, who had been a 'Blue' not so long before, it came as a shock to be informed by his adored oracle that his life had been wasted, and his intention of living at present as a peaceful country gentleman had been denounced as iniquitous idleness. Even his ambition to cultivate politics was worse than useless in Monica's eyes, for Mr Ingram was an average Conservative, and she affected a nebulous but perfervid Radicalism. A touching unpractical sympathy with humanity in general, and at a distance, goes well with violet eyes and a soft, tremulous mouth. Apparently, also, their discussions had been complicated by religious questions; but the chief count in the indictment was, as I have said, Mr Ingram's utter uselessness.

When I had heard enough I cut his babblings short, and we talked of other things. After his sojourn in Monica's rarefied atmosphere, he displayed an appetite for those other things. At times he relapsed into melancholy; but after a victorious exchange of repartee with a man in a steam-launch, he became quite cheerful. It was not until we neared home again that the moon-calf expression reappeared. Then it loomed out large as Monica passed into the house in the distance.

'I feel an awful beast,' he said.

'Oh, never mind,' I answered. 'It's all for the best, and you haven't been very much bored, have you?'

'Of course I haven't,' he said; 'but it does seem a little mean, doesn't it?'

'If a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing well,' I explained. 'Good-bye, Mr Ingram.'

'Good-bye, Miss Kitty,' he said. 'Would to-morrow be too soon for further operations?'

'Oh no,' I replied. 'We must keep it up.'

Next morning he appeared again on some excuse or other, and we wandered out on the river. He inquired eagerly whether the plan was succeeding at all, and I could truthfully assure him it was. Monica had confronted me with a subacid saintliness, as I explained to Mr Ingram in more graceful terms. Mr Ingram positively chuckled. A lucid interval of irrational society had done him good, and he already entertained a better opinion of himself. Then he asked me how long I thought the treatment ought to last, and I recommended a week at least. He said I was a jolly good little sort, and we relapsed into other things and spent the morning in a backwater.

During the next few days we repeated the process with slight variations. We went for one or two bicycle rides, and played cricket in the orchard with my young brother Toby. Monica does not bicycle, and refused frigidly to play cricket. I was a little afraid at first that Mr Ingram would make premature overtures for peace in spite of my strong advice, and the first day he showed symptoms of doing so. Monica's righteous severity repressed them, however, and after that

he entered fully into the spirit of the plan. Altogether I was pleased with him. His success in discovering excuses for visiting the house and his manœuvres for getting away with me were creditable. It was too shameful to reduce him to a mooncalf. He also appeared to enjoy himself. He was much more in his element while explaining to me the mysteries of a late ent and basking in the adulation of Toby than when grappling with the good, the true, and the beautiful.

Monica meanwhile grew more and more stony. Her lips assumed an expression of the sternest piety when she spoke to me, and she betook herself again to district visiting, which is usually a sign with her of despair with things in general. I wondered whether she would be foolish enough to remonstrate with me. Of course, if she had been wise she would have held her tongue; but it is difficult for a practised preacher to remain silent when irritated. Finally she was provoked to speech by a climax. The climax came after she had made some slight attempts at reclaiming Mr Ingram near the end of the week which we had arranged for the campaign. The attempts were a little too like a command, and the moment was unfortunate, for Mr Ingram had just defined a punt as the tribute which athleticism pays to philosophy, and was regarding himself with satisfaction. Monica said she failed to see anything funny in the remark, and the attempts failed.

'Kitty,' she remarked to me after breakfast next day, 'I wish to have a few minutes' serious conversation with you.'

'Isn't it a little too hot for that kind of thing?' I suggested.

'I fear,' she answered severely, 'that you regard serious conversation as out of place at any time, Kitty.'

'For once,' I said, 'I am inclined to agree with you.'

'I never attempt now,' she went on, 'to speak seriously to you unless I feel compelled to'—

'What a life of self-sacrifice!' I murmured.

'Kitty,' she replied majestically, 'you are merely prolonging a painful interview.'

'Well, if you put it in that way'—I observed. 'What's the matter now?'

'I have noticed,' she remarked slowly, 'that Mr Ingram has been here constantly during the last few days.'

'I have noticed the same thing,' I agreed, 'for the last month or more.'

'It is some considerable time,' she continued unabashed. 'Several times I have suspected that he came here on some unreal pretence.'

'I have suspected it myself,' I said; 'he's an awful liar.'

'Mr Ingram,' she replied acidly, 'has the makings of a very fine character in him if he is not spoilt. It was with reference to that that I wished to speak to you.'

'As far as I can discover from Mr Ingram,' I said, 'his chief fault is that he will not leave off-balls alone enough. Is that information any use to you?'

'Kitty,' Monica said, with a rising flush, 'you will compel me to speak plainly in a minute.'

'Hurrah!' I interjected rudely.

'Impertinence will not debar me from my duty,' she went on. 'You and he have been pursuing a course of conduct which I should characterise in any one but my sister as a flirtation.'

'What should you call it in a sister, then?' I inquired.

'I am content to call it thoughtless,' she said.

'That must be an effort,' I suggested. 'I thought you would have called it a disgraceful flirtation.'

'I have even—I am sorry to say,' she added—'suspected clandestine meetings.'

'Clandestine? That's a difficult question,' I answered, which was true, for I had taken care that the concealment should not extend to Monica. 'If you tell a person you're going bicycling somewhere and he suddenly turns up there, is it clandestine?'

'I never would have believed you would have gone so far,' she said, with another flush.

'It was only about twenty miles,' I urged.

'Of course this cannot continue,' she said; 'people are beginning to talk already.'

'Oh Monica, Monica!' I murmured, 'gossip is a thing to be avoided.'

'I must protect my sister even from herself at all costs,' she said firmly.

'As you observe, it's much safer to sit in a summer-house,' I replied. The summer-house is Monica's favourite haunt.

'Very well,' she concluded, 'you leave only one course open to me. I must speak to mother about this. The matter must be placed on a proper footing.'

'Monica, if I promise'—I pleaded with apparent contrition.

'Well, Kitty?'

'Not to see him more than four times a week, would that do?'

'I hoped,' she remarked sadly, 'that you would have seen your conduct in its proper light.'

'You mean its improper light, Monica?'

'I shall speak to mother this morning,' she repeated.

She had not departed for more than ten minutes when Mr Ingram arrived, to ask Toby to play in a cricket match. At least he was ready to tell any one else so. However, we agreed that the invitation could wait, and adjourned to the punt.

'The week will be up to-morrow,' I observed after a time.

'It's only Thursday to-day,' he replied absently. He had been a little preoccupied since we started.

'I mean *the* week,' I said. 'I really think it

has been a success. I had a conversation with Monica this morning.'

'Oh yes,' he answered. 'What did she say?'

'The last thing she said,' I observed, 'was that she was going to tell mother.'

'Tell your mother?'

'Yes, about us,' I explained. 'It's rather fortunate the week's up, isn't it?'

'About us!' he exclaimed. 'Why, I used to do very much the same when—how beastly mean!'

'Don't you see the difference?' I inquired.

'No,' he said decidedly, 'I don't.'

'Is your mother sure to drop on it?' he began again after a long pause.

'She generally adopts Monica's suggestions—in matters of this kind,' I said; 'and really, Mr Ingram, a week's quite long enough.'

'You wouldn't think of going on with it a little longer?' he asked.

'It's quite unnecessary,' I said; 'the week has served its purpose.'

'It hasn't been bad fun, has it?' he answered slowly. 'We've had rather a good time, haven't we?'

'On the whole,' I agreed, 'I think we have.'

'I suppose I shan't see much of you after to-day?' he inquired.

'I dare say I shall be about sometimes,' I said cheerfully; 'but you're really getting the moon-calf expression on you again, and it isn't becoming. Remember, when you've made your peace with Monica, you mustn't take that tone any more, or this week will have been thrown away.'

'I haven't the least intention of taking that tone any more,' he said, and there was another long pause.

'Miss Kitty,' he observed irrelevantly, 'was Miss Ellis like you when she was your age? I can't remember.'

'Monica was always an angel, Mr Ingram,' I said.

'And you were always yourself,' he answered sadly.

'That is scarcely a compliment,' I suggested.

'Oh yes, it is,' he said, 'from my point of view.'

'It's a jolly day,' he began again after another interval of silence. 'It makes you feel—rather healthy.'

'You generally look pretty robust,' I said.

'I didn't mean exactly that,' he went on. 'I meant that it makes you feel it's rather a good thing to be alive in an every-day way.'

'You could scarcely be alive once a week,' I interjected.

'No, Miss Kitty,' he said a little testily, 'but don't you sometimes feel as if ordinary things and ordinary people were best?'

'As an ordinary person, I appreciate the compliment, Mr Ingram,' I answered.

'I didn't mean that; you know I didn't,' he

said; 'but there's a lot of humbug about, and on a day like this you see rather straight—it's like reading one of those philosophy books that prove you don't really exist, and then'—

'Having a good dinner afterwards,' I suggested.

'Well, that does rather express it,' he said.

'The philosophy of here-we-are-again,' I observed.

'Yes, but we shan't be here again,' he said; 'that's just it. After all, it's as useless as any other philosophy.'

'Aren't you getting a little complicated, Mr Ingram?' I asked.

'I've been getting complicated,' he said sadly, 'for the last week. If there ever was an ass, it's I.'

'Cheer up, Mr Ingram,' I replied; 'Monica will put your mind to rights.'

'Bother Monica,' he said sharply.

'What?' I exclaimed, with an expression of astonishment.

'The fact of the matter is, Miss Kitty,' he said, 'I don't want any more of that. It was all utter rot, and I hope you won't mention it again.'

'And so we've wasted the whole week,' I replied, 'and'—

'We haven't wasted it,' he protested; 'but it's no good now.'

'To put it mildly, aren't you just a little unstable?' I said severely.

'Of course it might seem like that to most people,' he said.

'It might,' I agreed. 'And poor Monica!'

'I'm not such a puppy as to think she'll mind,' he replied. Humility is occasionally a convenient virtue. 'Do you think me an utterly shallow fool?' he inquired.

'I would scarcely go so far as that,' I said.

'I'm not so shallow as I seem; I'm not, really,' he said earnestly. 'It's no good of course, but I'd like to tell you. I don't want you to think me quite worthless.'

'Well?' I said.

'It sounds so bald,' he murmured, 'and yet I can see it quite plainly myself.'

'Would you mind driving this swan away, Mr Ingram?' I interrupted. The bird was under the impression that we were lunching, and had approached me with that suave, blackmailing expression peculiar to Thames swans and bank loafers.

'Certainly, certainly,' he said, and, having done so, again relapsed into silence. I could see that he was thinking hard, and he absently lit his lighted pipe four times.

'Miss Kitty,' he said at last, 'I can't explain it any other way. Would you mind my telling you a story—a kind of parable, you know?'

'I should like it,' I said.

'Once,' he began, 'there was a young goose'—

'That,' I interjected, 'is not uncommon'—

'Please, don't interrupt,' he said. 'At least he was a young gander. And he got rather good at swimming and flying and diving, and all that kind of thing.'

'Ganders, even in parables, don't dive,' I suggested.

'What does it matter?' he went on. 'After he'd been swimming and flying for a long time, he got rather tired of it, and one day he swam up a backwater. It was a nice, shady backwater, and he found a swan there. She was a very stately swan, and she looked rather cool and restful. She didn't swim or fly around much, but she knew everything about the bottom of the river, and the clouds, and currents, and all that. The young gander talked to her for a long time, and came back pretty often; and because he'd swum and flown such a lot he thought he was tired of being a gander and wanted to be a swan. He was rather an ass of a gander.'

'What a weird animal!' I remarked as he paused.

'Then one day,' he pursued—'one day when it was sunshiny outside the backwater, he saw another bird swimming about outside in the sun.'

'What kind of bird was it?' I asked.

'It was a pretty, lively little bird,' he said.

'Call it a duck,' I said gravely.

'It was, I think, a bird of Paradise,' he said, with a noble disregard of natural history, 'and he couldn't help going out and swimming about in the sun too. In a day or two he found out that swimming and flying were what he could do best, and that it was what a gander is intended

to do. And he didn't care a snap about clouds and currents, and he didn't want to be a swan any more. And he found the other little bird was the jolliest and prettiest little bird he'd ever met, and he was happier than he'd ever been before. But one day the other little bird told him that she was going away, and wouldn't fly about in the sun any more. And then he knew—well, hang it! he knew that he'd give the whole river if he could always swim about with the little bird. He couldn't help telling her so.'

'Well, how did it end?' I asked.

'Of course,' he said sadly, 'she didn't want to swim about with him. I don't suppose she would in any case, and then she knew about the backwater and what an ass the gander had been, and didn't believe he could really care about anybody. Oh Kitty, Kitty, don't you understand now?'

'There's a small mistake in the story,' I said.

'What is it?' he said despairingly.

'Only,' I said, 'that the other little bird was a little goose.'

'A little goose?' he exclaimed.

'And the story needn't end in that way,' I added, 'unless you wish it.'

'Then, Kitty——?' he cried in astonishment.

I think I nodded. The rest of the conversation was commonplace.

Monica congratulated me with a chastened sorrow which her fears for poor George's future aroused. She has also hinted several times that I intended the culmination from the first. Did I? I wonder.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A NEW TERRESTRIAL ELEMENT.



HE spectroscopic, that wonderful analyser of distant orbs, has long ago shown that a number of the substances known to science as elementary bodies are present in the sun. Their presence is revealed by certain lines which, to the educated eye, are unmistakable. Amid these multitudes of lines was a certain green one derived from the sun's corona, which could not be identified with the lines peculiar to any substance known on this earth. It was therefore concluded that it represented an unknown element; and to this mysterious thing the name Coronium was given. In a note communicated to the French Academy, Professor Nasini, of Padua, makes the announcement that he, in conjunction with two other workers, has discovered terrestrial coronium. In the spectroscopic examination of the gases emanating from volcanic sources in different parts of Italy, with a view to detect the presence of argon and helium, they have found the green line peculiar

to coronium. From certain observations, these experimenters are able to predict that there are probably other hitherto unrecognised elements among the gases given out from the ground in the neighbourhood of Vesuvius.

THE IRON-MINES OF GELLIVARE.

In *Chambers's Journal* for January 16, 1897, appeared an article entitled 'To Lulea in Norbotten,' by Mr J. Logie Robertson, Edinburgh, describing a visit to the iron-mines of Gellivare, which lie within the Arctic Circle, near Lulea, Sweden. A party of the Iron and Steel Institute left Stockholm in August, to visit the mines, make a tour in the district, and report on their commercial prospects. There are three main deposits available for export, the only one being worked at the present time being that of Gellivare, by the Gellivare Mining Company. The ores are of wonderful richness, exceeding sixty-five per cent. of iron, the deposits lying largely on the surface, and are of such thickness that they can be quarried at small cost—more cheaply, says a writer in the *Scotsman*, than any ore-deposits in the world, unless it be

those in the Lake Superior region. They are also declared to be practically inexhaustible, and may in time furnish a cheaper source of supply than those mines we have been so largely dependent on in Spain.

MALARIAL FEVER.

A very important address was recently given by Professor Koch before the German Colonial Society. The Professor has lately returned from German East Africa, and he dealt with the various observations which he had there made. He stated that he had found a study of Texas fever in cattle of great assistance in giving a key to the origin of tropical malaria. Cattle disease was transferred from one animal to another by the sole agency of that animal parasite, the tick. He had been able to infect sound cattle with ticks taken from diseased ones; moreover, he had been able to render cattle immune against Texas fever by inoculating them with the ova of ticks taken from diseased animals. Malarial fever was in many respects like Texas fever, and he had arrived at the conclusion that in the human subjects mosquitoes played the part which ticks played in cattle disease. Mosquitoes were present where malaria raged; and where there were no mosquitoes, as in a certain small island on the German East African coast, there was no malaria. By microscopical examination of the blood it was possible to ascertain the exact stage of the disease, a thing of great importance, for much depended upon the administration of quinine before the attack or in its early stage. He called attention to the circumstance that the natives were proof against infection, and where natural immunity existed there was reasonable hope of affording artificial protection. Trained doctors should be sent to East Africa; and if science can only successfully cope with malarial fever, the conquest will facilitate the prosperous development of some of the most fruitful districts in the world.

SPURIOUS WORKS OF ART.

A recent law case, which turned upon the genuineness of certain so-called Dresden china, has revived the subject of imitation antiques. It is asserted that factories exist in certain capitals of Europe for the production of all such things as collectors love to accumulate. Old china is imitated with the marks so cleverly reproduced that it taxes the knowledge of an expert to detect the fraud. Brand-new armour is treated with acid, so that its surface bears the corrosion which is attributed to centuries of exposure to the air. Carved ivories are soaked in oil, and exposed to heat until they discolour and crack as from the assaults of time; and pieces of furniture of modern make are drilled with imitation worm-holes. Ancient coins are imitated in such perfect manner that it is most difficult to see that they are creations of yesterday. An old clock of

the 'grandfather' pattern is a valuable possession to one of these fraudulent manufacturers, for he will very soon turn it into three or four distinct timepieces. The dial will go to one, the works into another, and the case will form the attractive feature of a third. The top of a table may be the only part of it which is old, the legs having gone to confer age upon another piece of furniture. Such are some of the tricks of trade for which the collector of curiosities must be prepared.

DESTRUCTIVE MISSILES.

A notable feature of modern warfare is the employment of what are known as high explosives. In the American campaign in Cuba the dynamite-gun has been used with awful effect, the Spaniards saying that earthquakes were being thrown at them. This gun is not fired with a charge of gunpowder, the shock of which would be likely to explode the dynamite-shell, but by compressed air, which urges the shot forward in a more gradual manner. The dynamite-gun is, in fact, a pea-shooter on a very large scale. Experiments have been lately made by our own military authorities with the explosive known as lyddite, which is said to be a preparation of picrate of potash. Six-inch shells containing this explosive were directed against a stone wall ten feet thick at the base, and tapering to six feet at the top. At a range of five hundred yards this wall was shattered so that troops could easily enter at the breaches made. It is also reported that these missiles exploded with such terrific force, and cast such clouds of debris around them, that any enemy within a radius of two hundred and fifty yards must infallibly be killed or disabled.

TO CLEAN THE OUTSIDE OF WINDOWS FROM THE INSIDE.

The Aberdeen Parish Council lately adopted an improvement in their new offices, in so far as they have carried out the principle of making their windows open towards the inside when they require to be cleaned. This is a decided improvement, and there is no use in recalling here the danger and the very numerous fatal accidents that have taken place through cleaning windows from the outside. These accidents happen to professed window-cleaners as well as to housewives and domestic servants. The invention has been patented by a working joiner named Charles Reid, of 48 Esslemont Avenue, Aberdeen; and Messrs McRobbie & Milne, of Albert Place, Aberdeen, are his agents. The mechanism is simple and inexpensive, and can be adapted to existing windows. By its means the inner end of the sashes can be rested on any suitable support, such as a table or a chair, the cleaner standing on the floor of the room. Both sashes can be drawn up and down like an ordinary window. The sash-sills are of full strength, the fitting inexpensive, and the

invention on the whole deserves the attention of architects and those engaged in the building trades.

REMEDIES FOR BEE-STINGS.

A paragraph on this subject which recently appeared in these columns has brought us many letters from bee-keepers, from which we gather that the stings of bees are often more serious than most persons imagine. Probably, as in the case of other poisonous attacks by insects, they affect certain persons more than others; but it would seem that the stings are sometimes followed by severe pain, and in extreme cases by collapse. One lady, who has had much experience with bees, asserts that the ammonia remedy, although valuable, is often rendered still more effective if brandy diluted with half its bulk of water be taken internally. Another pins her faith on immediately rubbing the wounds with honey—which, she tells us, gives almost instant relief.

DESTRUCTION OF WEEDS.

At a recent meeting of the French Society of Agriculture, M. Girard, a well-known agricultural chemist, described a method of freeing fields from the common charlock, a weed which, when it once gains a footing, is most difficult to eradicate. This method consists in watering the field with a five per cent. solution of blue-stone (sulphate of copper), which kills the weed without having any deleterious effect upon the grain crop. The explanation is, that the salt is readily absorbed by the permeable tissues of the charlock, while the hard cuticle of the wheat or oats rejects its intrusion. In the discussion which followed the reading of this note, M. Bernard said that the cheaper sulphate of iron, mixed in the proportion of two and a half pounds to one gallon of water, was still more effective as a weed-eradicator.

ARTIFICIAL EYES.

The *Lancet* publishes some curious facts with regard to the number of false eyes which are turned out annually by different factories in Germany and France. The total of these ornamental appendages made in the German Empire is said to amount to the enormous total of two millions yearly; and, at the same time, one French factory, out of many, makes three hundred thousand in the same period. But we must not jump to the conclusion that these figures indicate in any way the number of human beings who have been deprived of the sight of one eye, for the artificial eyes include those used by wax-figure makers, by taxidermists, and even by the doll manufacturers. It is noteworthy that the totally blind never wear false eyes. The person who has been deprived of the sight of one eye sees his disfigurement whenever he looks into a glass, and his æsthetic sense—or perhaps his vanity—leads him to make good the deficiency in the best

way he can. In the case of the wholly blind such feelings die out, or are submerged in the immensity of their loss.

THE PRESERVATION OF MEAT.

A Danish zoologist, August Fjelstrup, is said to have discovered a new and efficient way of preserving meat, which has been adopted with success in the Danish slaughterhouses during the past year. The method is founded on the theory that decomposition of the blood is almost entirely responsible for the rapid putrefaction of the animal body. Means are therefore taken to remove the blood from the carcass immediately after death, and to inject the vessels with a solution of brine, the entire process occupying only a few minutes. It is not stated to what extent this treatment alters the character of the meat from a gastronomic point of view, but we assume that it would, in the case of imported meats, be far preferable to some of the methods of meat preservation now in vogue. Foreign hams, and more especially hares, are preserved with some resinous compound, which not only takes away the original flavour of the meat, but makes it absolutely nauseous.

TREASURE-SEEKERS.

Buried or sunken treasure has always had a great fascination about it, as story-book writers and readers well know; and when we hear of actual efforts being made to find and recover such riches from the depth of the sea, we are sure to take much interest in the proceedings, although we have no chance of sharing in the proceeds. Such a search is now in progress in Dunworley Bay on the coast of Cork, divers being busy in examining a wreck which has lain there for many years. Some say that it is one of the ill-fated Armada galleons; others, with apparently better authority, that it is a pirate schooner which foundered during the reign of William and Mary. And this latter story is to some extent corroborated by the coins of that reign which have already been recovered from the wrecked ship. It is not the first time that attempts have been made to recover treasure from this spot, for half a century ago a diver was busy here, and succeeded in recovering various articles. But the diver's gear had not then been brought to the perfection which it has now reached; nor was dynamite, that potent aid to separating a wrecked ship's timbers, discovered. With the help of modern apparatus and appliances, it is hoped that the old wreck on the Irish coast will now yield a more valuable harvest.

BLOODHOUNDS ON THE TRACK.

The Association of Bloodhound Breeders has made arrangements, which will possibly be carried out before these words appear in print, to carry out a series of trials across a tract of country in

the Yorkshire wolds, with a view to test the powers of the bloodhound in man-hunting. There will be prizes awarded to the owners of the dogs which acquit themselves best in this novel competition. It may be remembered that some years ago, when the East End of London became notorious through a series of brutal murders, it was proposed to put dogs on the scent of the murderer; but difficulties occurred, and the scheme was abandoned. It is somewhat repugnant to the feelings that a man should be hunted down by dogs; but as long as we have in our midst those whom it would be sheer flattery to call brutes, it is well to be prepared with every appliance for their capture that ingenuity can devise. So we may fairly hope that the experiments on the Yorkshire wolds will be successful.

GAS ENRICHMENT.

Much discussion has taken place during the past year with regard to the question of enriching coal-gas in a manner which may possibly render it more poisonous than it now is. The method now adopted is to add to the gas a certain amount of water-gas, made luminous by means of petroleum; and an article on the subject appeared on November 20, 1897, in our columns. The Public Control Committee of the London County Council have been considering this important matter, and they now report that, in their opinion, considerable danger is attached to the method adopted; that water-gas by itself, being devoid of smell, and therefore giving no warning of its dangerous presence, should not be allowed to be used under any conditions whatever; and that if the enriched water-gas be allowed to be introduced into coal-gas, twenty-five per cent. should be the maximum amount. They also recommend that in all cases where the addition is made, a proper inspection of the service-pipes of buildings should be made by efficient officers, to see that there is no leakage—such inspection to be at the expense of the gas company.

'THE LADS IN RED.'

It has long been a moot point whether the scarlet uniform worn in the British army is the best colour that can be adopted. It is certainly a warm colour for cold climates, but a hot one for the tropics; and for an empire upon which the sun never sets, this question of heat-conduction must be considered. But more attention is generally paid to the matter of conspicuousness in the field, and some recent experiments in Germany are for this reason interesting to us. A squad of ten men, each couple of which were dressed in a differently coloured tunic, was ordered to march across an open country, their movements being closely followed by a company of quick-sighted observers. The first couple to disappear were the men in light-gray; then the two in scarlet went out

of sight; then a couple in dark-gray; and finally the men dressed in blue and green. In experiments at our own rifle-butts, it has been found that for some reason or other scarlet is protection to the soldier in that it is the most difficult colour to hit. After all, such experiments are not of the value which they would have been before the days of machine and dynamite guns. A hail of lead, such as is now possible by the aid of modern appliances, does not discriminate between men whatever be the colour of their uniforms, but will be as impartial in spotting them as is a shower of rain.

HERE THE DAY.

We wakened at the dawning, but we never saw the day;
And we spoke our little prologue, but we never reached
the play.

Oh! our love was sweet and certain till gray Sorrow
dropt the curtain.

Ay, we wakened at the dawning, but we never saw the
day.

There were buds within our garden, but they never came
to flower;

There were birds among our bushes, but they only sang
an hour.

And we laughed to see the swallow, but the summer did
not follow;

There were buds within our garden, but they never
came to flower.

'Tis a garment white and silken, 'tis a white and misty
veil,

'Tis a pair of little slippers—O dear love!—so white and
frail.

Is the manhood in me dying that I'm sitting here and
crying

O'er a garment and a slipper and a never-opened veil?

Dear, the world is empty—empty as the gemless golden
band,

The token I had fingered and that never found your
hand.

They've been telling me the story of an everlasting
glory;

But you were the only preacher I could ever understand.

Ah, we wakened at the dawning, but we never saw the
day;

And we spoke our little prologue, but we never reached
the play.

But our love was sweet and certain till gray Sorrow
dropt the curtain.

Hark! a single bell is calling . . . and this should
have been the day.

J. J. BELL.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the
Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps
should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANU-
SCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or
otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address
written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accom-
panied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE CANDIDATE'S WEDDING.

By JAMES WORKMAN.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.



DOUGLAS GRANT, barrister-at-law and parliamentary candidate for Southpool, was shaving in his dressing-room at the Royal Hotel on the morning of the polling-day.

He was a tall, broad-shouldered, well-built young man, with clear-cut features, crisp fair hair, quiet gray eyes, well-shaped mouth and chin, and a large yellow moustache. He was rather exceptionally good-looking; though an impartial observer might have doubted it as Grant stood glaring into the mirror with his mouth and nose on one side and his right cheek plastered with shaving-soap. A pronounced prejudice against being shaved by any one but himself was one of his small peculiarities.

'Come in,' he exclaimed, hearing a knock at the door.

A waiter thrust his head into the room.

'If you please, sir, Mr Barker wishes to see you immediately.'

Barker was Grant's election agent.

'Show him up,' said Douglas.

The waiter looked slightly scandalised.

'Show him up 'ere, sir?' he asked.

'Certainly.'

A minute afterwards Barker entered. He was tall and slight, wore spectacles, and had a thin, prim face and self-poised manner. Having raised himself in the social scale, he attached an exaggerated importance to propriety of speech and deportment. In his sedate black clothes, and with a shiny silk hat in his hand, he formed a curious contrast to the athletic young candidate who stood before the glass in his pyjamas, scraping industriously at his soapy cheek.

Barker stood hesitatingly near the door.

'Come in, come in,' said Douglas. 'Chuck those things off the chair and sit down.'

Barker carefully removed a waistcoat and a

NO. 44.—VOL. I.

pair of inexpressibles from the only chair, placed them on a towel-rail, and sat gingerly down.

'Well, what is it?' asked Douglas.

'I extremely regret to inform you that I have some very unpleasant news for you, Mr Grant.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Douglas, with a grimace; 'what's up now? Anything wrong in my speech last night? Whose corns have I trodden on now?'

'Will you pardon me asking if you have heard from Miss Meredith this morning?'

Douglas looked at him with a queer smile.

'No,' he rejoined. 'I could hardly expect to. I suppose she's engaged in the sacred mysteries of the toilet, and all that kind of thing. She has no time to think of anything masculine until she has made herself a thing of beauty and a joy for ever.'

Douglas was to be married that morning to Elsie Meredith, the daughter of the most popular and influential man in the district. It had been considered a happy idea that his marriage should take place on the polling-day, and that, as his enthusiastic supporters put it, the constituency should be presented to him as a wedding gift.

'Besides,' continued Douglas, 'I understand it's not quite the thing for me to see her until we meet at the church.'

'Ah!' said Barker meaningly. 'I'm afraid there's not much prospect of you doing that to-day, Mr Grant.'

'What the dickens do you mean?' asked the astonished Douglas. 'Oh, hang it all, man! out with it,' he continued, as Barker still hesitated. 'Don't beat about the bush, or try to break the news to me. I shan't go into hysterics. Out with it.'

'Then I am very sorry to inform you, Mr Grant, that Mr Meredith is in custody on a charge of—of embezzlement.'

[All Rights Reserved.]

OCT. 1, 1898.

'Meredith in custody on a charge of embezzlement!' exclaimed Douglas. 'Are you drunk, Barker, or have you taken leave of your senses?'

Barker got up with a very sour expression in his small eyes.

'I am not in the habit, Mr Grant'—he began.

'Very well, very well,' interrupted Douglas impetuously. 'I don't want to hurt your feelings, or anything of that kind; but for heaven's sake, man, don't waste any more time. Let me hear the particulars at once.'

'Mr Meredith, as you are perhaps aware,' said Barker, 'is the chairman of the Southpool Building Society, in which almost every man in the neighbourhood who has a few pounds to spare is more or less interested. Some of the poorer people have invested all their savings in it, solely on the strength of Mr Meredith's connection with it. A new auditor was recently appointed, and he went through the books yesterday. He discovered that the accounts had been systematically cooked for some time, and that many thousands of pounds—twenty, forty, fifty—I don't know the exact amount—had been made away with. The secretary was at once arrested. He confessed that he was guilty, but stated that he was merely a tool in the hands of the chairman, Mr Meredith; and Meredith was arrested this morning. He is now in custody at the police station.'

'Do you know all this as an absolute fact?' asked Douglas.

'I should not have ventured to repeat it if I had not done so,' replied Barker stiffly.

Douglas swiftly concluded his shaving, and began to wash and dress with the utmost rapidity.

'It was well the truth came out before the ceremony,' said Barker reassuringly. 'I think you'll be quite safe as it is. People will think you've been taken in as well.'

Douglas paused, hair-brush in hand, and eyed Barker with a peculiar expression.

'Will you have the goodness to explain what you mean?' he asked.

'When Meredith was taken to the police station,' said Barker, 'he was surrounded by a howling mob of half-frantic men and women, ruined shareholders of the Southpool Building Society, who wanted to lynch him. It took a dozen constables to keep them back. If you had'

The expression in Douglas's eyes puzzled Barker, and he hesitated.

'Go on,' said Douglas.

'Well, if you had married Miss Meredith you simply wouldn't have the very slightest chance of becoming the member for Southpool.'

'Ah!' rejoined Douglas. 'Then I am afraid, Barker, that my chance of attaining that distinguished position is, to say the least of it, remote; for you may quite definitely make up

your mind to one thing, and that is, that whether I become the member for Southpool or not, I shall most certainly marry Miss Meredith.'

Barker turned pale.

'You will—will marry Miss Meredith?' he stammered.

'Certainly.'

'But not to-day—surely not to-day.'

'Not to-day?' repeated Douglas. 'Why, of course I shall marry her to-day. In the first place, I don't for one single moment believe Mr Meredith to be guilty. It's simply preposterous to bring such a charge against him. I've known him for years, and I never knew a more truthful, upright, honourable man. It's grotesquely absurd to accuse him of dishonesty. But even if I believed him to be guilty, do you suppose that anything her father might have done would induce me to shame and disgrace an innocent girl by turning my back upon her almost at the very door of the church?'

'But don't you see—don't you see,' stuttered Barker, 'that you will simply be committing suicide—social and political suicide? Hardly a man in Southpool will vote for Meredith's son-in-law. You won't have the ghost of a chance of being elected.'

'We'll see about that,' replied Douglas. 'I don't altogether agree with you. If there's one quality the average Englishman admires it's pluck. If there's one person the average Englishman despises it's a sneak. If I didn't marry Miss Meredith I should be a sneak, Barker; and there's not a man whose opinion is worth taking into account who wouldn't cut me dead, let alone voting against me, when he'd had time to think over it. In any case, you may take it for granted that the wedding will take place just as if nothing had happened.'

Pale with anger, Barker moved towards the door. He had regarded the election as a stepping-stone in his own career. If Grant were defeated, he would share in the disgrace of the defeat. He had strained every nerve to win the election, and success had appeared certain up to the moment of Meredith's arrest. Defeat was now a foregone conclusion, and his face grew livid with rage and disappointment.

'Look here, Barker,' said Douglas; 'I should like you to understand that I think this is very hard lines on you. You've worked like a brick—upon my word you have—and I hate to see a man lose the game by a fluke when he has played it as cleverly as you have. Still, I don't think the outlook is quite so black as you suppose; and, in any case, I shall expect you to stand by me to the end. You must give me your hand on that.'

He held out his hand with such a frank, good-humoured smile that Barker was compelled to take it, and even to blow a little in spite of himself.

'Of course I shall do all I can, Mr Grant,' he said, with a shake of the head; 'but I know beforehand that nothing I can do will prevent you being at the bottom of the poll.'

'Well, we'll see—we'll see,' said Douglas cheerily. 'And, oh, by the way, look here. I've just had a telegram from my friend Wilson, who was going to act as my best-man. He's down with the influenza, and can't come. If you'll kindly excuse me asking you at such extremely short notice, I should be awfully obliged if you'd take his place.'

'But, my—my dear sir,' stammered Barker helplessly, 'I don't see how I can possibly do that when I—I so entirely disapprove of'—

'Pooh, pooh, my dear fellow! not another word,' exclaimed Grant. 'Of course you disapprove. Quite right, too, from your point of view. I should do the same thing myself. But I know you're far too good a fellow not to help me out of a fix like this. Come, it's a bargain—isn't it? Thanks, awfully. You're a brick. I knew I could depend on you.'

He fumbled in his waistcoat pocket, while Barker stood gazing at him too bewildered to expostulate.

'Here's the ring. You'll take charge of it—won't you? And, look here, you might just toddle over to the vicarage and tell the vicar he may expect us at eleven o'clock as arranged. We fixed an early hour so that I might have the rest of the day free. You will? Thanks awfully. See you again soon. Good-morning.'

As soon as Barker had disappeared, Douglas hurriedly finished dressing, snatched a hasty breakfast, and, escaping with difficulty from the clutches of the excited politicians who flocked round him to discuss the unexpected situation, drove at full speed to Oak Lodge, Mr Meredith's residence.

The man who opened the door wore an aspect of funereal gloom.

'Yes, sir,' he said, 'Miss Meredith's in, sir; and though she's not at home to any one else, I suppose she'll see you, sir. I 'ope, sir, if you'll excuse me sayin' so, sir, as you'll be able to cheer her up a bit. It's heart-breakin' to see her, poor young lady. Even if the weddin' is haff, sir, the sight of you'll do her a heap of good, sir.'

'What in the world do you mean by talking like that?' exclaimed Douglas irritably.

'I—I'm sure I beg pardon, sir,' stammered the poor man. 'I meant no offence, sir.'

'Perhaps not. But what the dickens do you mean by the wedding being off?'

Brown gazed at him with a look of stupefaction.

'Why, 'aven't you heard what's 'appened, sir?' he gasped.

'Of course I've heard everything, my good man; but you may take my word for it that the wedding is not off. Do you understand?'

The wedding is *not* off. Now, where is Miss Meredith?'

'She's in the library, sir.'

'Very well; I'll go there. You needn't come.'

Douglas strode across the hall, opened the door of the library, and went in.

A pretty young housemaid, plump and rosy-cheeked, whose eyes were red with sympathetic woe, popped out of an adjoining room.

'Did you hear him, Mary?' exclaimed Brown excitedly. 'He's a *man*—he is.'

'A man, indeed!' exclaimed Mary contemptuously. 'I call him a real gentleman.'

'It's the same thing, my dear,' said Brown.

'And now, look here, my girl; I don't agree with his views on the Heddication Question, and I don't consider him sound, as you may say, on matters relatin' to hagriculture; but I've a vote for the cottage my old mother lives in, and that vote he shall have, and as many more as I can get him.'

'If you don't vote for him,' exclaimed Mary, 'I'll never, never speak to you again. Oh, I should like to hug him!'

'Would a hindividual of the name of Brown do instead, Mary?' asked the admiring footman.

In the meantime Douglas had discovered Elsie in a state of collapse on the library sofa, dishevelled, woe-begone, quivering with sobs, the most forlorn, pathetic-looking little object his eyes had ever rested upon. Fortunately for the success of his plans, discouragement had usually an exhilarating rather than a depressing effect on Douglas. Opposition quite cheered him up, and with the appearance of an apparently insurmountable obstacle he really began to enjoy himself. Otherwise he might have shrunk back aghast at the indignation which Elsie displayed at being married while 'her poor, dear papa' was locked up in the police station.

'I would never dream of doing it,' she exclaimed. 'I wonder you can suggest such a thing, Douglas. It is most cruel and heartless of you.'

'That's sheer nonsense, my dear girl,' said Douglas cheerfully. 'Why, if you go on in this way, shutting yourself up, crying your eyes out, breaking off your marriage, and all that sort of thing, do you know what people will begin to say?'

'I don't know, and I don't care,' said the girl wearily. 'What does it matter what they say?'

'Well, they will begin to say that you believe your father to be guilty.'

Elsie raised herself on her elbows and glared at Douglas with eyes that glittered fiercely through her tears.

'Douglas!'

'That's what people will say,' rejoined Douglas placidly.

'I tell you I know he is not guilty,' cried the girl passionately. 'He couldn't be guilty of such a thing.'

'Then act as if you believed in his innocence,' replied Douglas. 'Dry your eyes, and fix up your hair, and take it smiling, my dear. Then, if you'll sort of straighten yourself out and put your things on, we'll drive to St Jude's right away, and show the public of Southpool that there are at least two people who believe in the innocence of the best man I ever knew—Thomas Meredith, my future father-in-law.'

His words brought the colour to her cheeks. She sat up and began mechanically to arrange her ruffled locks.

'Where are your bridesmaids?' he asked.

'Their father sent a note,' faltered Elsie, 'saying that under the circumstances he—he hoped I'd excuse them.'

'The cad!' exclaimed Douglas. 'Well, we'll do without them. We'll introduce a new fashion. We'll drive to the church together. Jump into your things, my dear, and we'll start at once.'

'Jump into my things,' she repeated, with a tearful smile. 'Who ever heard of any one jumping into a wedding-dress. Oh, it's all so different from what I expected! I wish I had a mother or sister to advise me. Do you really think I'm doing right, Douglas? Do you think papa won't be hurt?'

'My dear child, he'll take it as the most convincing proof that we don't attach the slightest importance to this preposterous charge. Now do run away and get ready, like a good little girl.'

Elsie had hardly left the room when the footman appeared.

'Oh,' he said, 'I thought Miss Elsie was here, sir.'

'What is it?'

'Miss Ethel West would like to see her, if you please, sir.'

'Miss West! Good! Ask her to come in at once.'

Brown ushered in a bright, brisk-looking girl in a bicycling costume.

'Miss Ethel!' exclaimed Douglas, shaking her cordially by the hand. 'How fortunate! You're just the very person I wanted to see.'

'Indeed. Where's Elsie?'

'She's struggling into her things.'

'Struggling into her things!'

'Yes, yes; arraying herself in robes of dazzling white, and all that sort of thing. And, look here, I've got an immense favour to ask of you. I know it sounds awfully cheeky; but for Elsie's sake I'm sure you won't refuse. You've heard what has taken place? I thought so. Well, her bridesmaids have backed out. Their father won't let them come. Now, what I want to ask you is this—Don't you think that under the circumstances you could see your way to waive ceremony and act as her bridesmaid—eh? It would be awfully kind of you.'

'But you don't mean to say that you are really going on with the wedding?' exclaimed the astonished girl.

'Most certainly I am, and you'll act as Elsie's bridesmaid—won't you?'

'In this costume?' cried Ethel.

'My dear Miss Ethel,' rejoined Douglas, with his sweetest smile, 'nothing could possibly look more becoming.'

'I couldn't do it, Mr Grant,' exclaimed Ethel, with a horrified glance at her short tweed skirt. 'The thing's impossible. I really couldn't.'

'My dear young lady,' said Douglas, 'think of poor Elsie. Suppose you were in her place. Suppose that those you had loved and trusted gave you the cold shoulder and turned their backs on you, wouldn't you appreciate the loyalty and affection of the true friend who stood by you in your hour of need; who cared nothing for the sneers and smiles and shrugs of any man or woman if she could prove her faith in you and love for you, by helping you when you most needed her assistance? That's the kind of friend you'll prove, Miss Ethel, I know. I was sure of it the moment I heard your name announced. You will—won't you? Thanks awfully. Now, do go and help poor Elsie to struggle into her things.'

'But, Mr Grant,' expostulated Ethel as, taking her gently by the arm, he led her towards the door, 'I—I—really I—oh! it's all so dreadfully unconventional.'

'Yes, yes,' admitted Douglas, 'it is. But it's just by doing unconventional things at a moment like this that we best prove our loyalty and affection.'

The girl stood hesitating for a moment at the door he had opened for her. Then she impulsively held out her hand.

'I didn't think that any power on earth would induce me to act as a bridesmaid in a bicycling costume,' she said; 'but I'd do that and more for any one who has shown such loyalty to the girl he loves as you, Mr Grant. I think Elsie ought to be the happiest girl in the world.'

'She ought indeed,' said Douglas cordially, 'when she has such a sincere and affectionate friend as you, Miss Ethel. Do make her hurry up. We'll only just have time to get to the church.'

In a phenomenally short space of time Elsie appeared in a dainty travelling dress, the most bewitching little bride, so he assured her, that ever stepped into a church. His enthusiasm was not wholly the outcome of an imagination inspired by love. The pale, refined, clear-cut little face, with its deep, luminous gray eyes, and halo of rippling gold, seemed to glimmer like a star in the dusky library. His pride and delight in her flushed her pale cheeks with a delicate rose, and with a lighter heart than she had felt since her father's arrest she took his arm and stepped almost cheerfully to the carriage.

In a few moments they were driving rapidly towards Southpool. Douglas had almost, and

Elsie perhaps altogether, forgotten about the election; but as the carriage rolled through the crowd collected before Douglas's committee-room, a sudden storm of hoots and hisses, and the sight of angry faces and brandished sticks, caused Elsie to start violently like one awakened out of a dream.

'Oh Douglas!' she cried, 'I had forgotten. Oh, how selfish I have been, thinking of myself

and papa, and forgetting all about you and the election! You must not marry me, Douglas; you shall not—not to-day, not before papa is proved innocent. If you do you will not be elected, and I should be the most miserable girl in the world. I could not endure it; I could never forgive myself. You must get out at once. You must leave me at once, and tell the coachman to drive back.'

THEN AND NOW: 1798-1898.



HE difference between our homes and surroundings and the houses and environments of a hundred years ago is sufficiently wide to satisfy the most exacting lover of startling contrasts. The state of things—social, religious, educational, commercial, political, and international—is so much in our favour that it seems scarcely worth while seriously comparing it with the condition of life that prevailed in the thirty-eighth year of the reign of King George the Third, the 'Farmer Monarch,' who lost us America, who was filled with honest wonder as to how the apple got into the dumpling, and who used to dip himself in the sea at Weymouth whilst a military band, stationed at a becoming distance, played 'God save the King' as he took his first plunge! Weighed fairly in the balances, the present year of grace makes 1798 'kick the beam.'

Yet there is a Debtor and Creditor side to the account. The past was not altogether without its advantages and compensations. Life was less complex, competition less keen, human wants were more simple, and rival interests not so exacting and arbitrary as they are to-day, when our population is more numerous and more closely packed, when the scale of everything is rising, and social requirements change every day their conditions and proportions. Our great-grandfathers took more solid views of life than their descendants. Semblance was not accepted for substance. Adulteration, false marking, and the coating and loading of textile fabrics to make textures of shadowy thinness heavy and seemingly stout and serviceable were unknown. Plausibility had not come into fashion. There was more respect paid to the aged; more real affection existed amongst relations and friends. Truthfulness and honour were not considered out of date. Sincerity had not sought refuge from the shams of Society. The phrase *fin-de-siècle* had not been invented for the eighteenth century. The affected, Talleyrand gospel of *surtout point de zèle* was not adopted by an invertebrate *jeunesse dorée*.

Let us turn back the fingers of the clock of time till they point to the figures 1798. There was a rebellion in Ireland. England was at war

with France. To furnish food for powder the recruiting sergeant was assisted by the press-gang. We were fighting both by land and sea. In 1798 Nelson won the battle of the Nile and broke the ocean-power of Napoleon. The land campaigns of Wellington had freed the Peninsula. But the slave-trade in our colonies flourished. The printing-machine was a mere hand-press. There were no cabs or omnibuses. Steam locomotion belonged to thirty years after date. Cycling was an uncoined word. The Tests and Corporation Acts were unrepealed. The Roman Catholic Relief Bill had not passed. There was no voting by ballot. Pocket-boroughs flourished; political debauchery was rampant. There was no police-force. Superstition reigned supreme; every village had its 'wise woman' and fortune-teller. Duels were common; so were diabolical outrages at sea. Men were executed for high treason, forgery, and horse-stealing. Hanging, drawing, and quartering were the cherished punishments of the criminal code. The hemp crop was the most flourishing and fruitful of harvests. The gibbet-post cast its baneful shadow over the land. Public executions were a popular outdoor entertainment provided by the State for the edification of the people. Suicides were buried without the offices of religion at the meeting of four cross-roads, with a stake through their hearts. Women were openly flogged. There was a public brand for scolds. Whipping-posts and stocks were prominent in every town and village. Women were placed in the pillory and pelted by the populace with rotten eggs, putrid vegetables, and the like. Flogging was of frequent occurrence in the army; deserters were incontinently shot; seamen were summarily hanged at the yard-arm for mutiny. Even penny news-rooms had their persecutions and martyrs. On the 6th of September 1798, six informations were heard before the magistrates at Bow Street, and laid by the Stamp Office, against a Mr Williams for suffering in his room in Old Round Court sundry persons to read the *Daily Advertiser* and other newspapers for the consideration of one penny each. The offence being held to be clearly made out, the infamous Williams was convicted in the penalty of five pounds on each information!

The jails were noisome dens, in which some thousands of French prisoners of war were incarcerated. Our present prisons are, in comparison, so many cleanly and commodious hydropathic establishments, with a gymnasium in the shape of the treadmill. There was then no waste in workhouses. Bumbledom held despotic sway. The 'unions' were full of squalid, sordid, repulsive misery. Mrs Gamp was the type of many of the coarse, ignorant, thieving, drunken beldames who did duty as 'nurses.' Lunacy one hundred years ago was treated as a crime. The poor insane were systematically exhibited to the public, chained to the wall like wild beasts, and excited to rage to make the spectacle more enjoyable, at a charge of twopence per visit.

Working-men literally worked in those days. They never kept St Monday. They even put work into their play. Some of their nineteenth-century successors reverse the process. The old operatives earned their bread by the sweat of their brow. If a factory-hand was seen to perspire to-day he would be instantly disowned by his trades union. The modern labourer, too, is an adept in the art of letting his pick drop listlessly on the ground with its own weight, and of stopping to contemplate things in general after every half-dozen strokes. If he hears the dinner-bell or the dismissal whistle sound when his hammer has ascended, he will bring it down without touching the nail or metal beneath, for fear of giving his employer one more movement of muscle than is his due. The writer has reliable record of a bricklayer's labourer who, with a hod of mortar on his head, being three-parts up a lofty ladder, and, hearing the clock strike the dinner-hour, carried the load down again, sooner than deliver it at the top in his own time.

A hundred years ago the hours were long, the occupations laborious, the wages low, the holidays few. Yet there were no 'strikes,' no conflicts between capital and labour; no professional agitators clamouring for nine hours' pay for eight hours' work; no philanthropic gentleman expert in the pretty art of putting public trust money to private purposes; few financiers whose speculations should be spelled without the letter 'a.' Company promoting had not been developed into one of the exact sciences; and unknown were those subtle Stock Exchange operations whereby men grow enormously rich by buying with nothing and selling for a great sum, or by buying what there is none of, and selling what does not exist.

It was a time of conscientious shopkeeping. The season of 'Alarming Sacrifices' had not set in. The tradesman relied on his well-filled shelves and the quality of his wares, and not upon sensational advertisements, monthly clearance sales, winter remnant sales below cost price, showy windows, plate-glass, gas, and glitter. His goods were not ticketed in the window; the three-farthings device he would have regarded with

repugnance. He would certainly have resented a plea of abatement as a personal insult, and the sight of the 'slop-shop' goods of to-day would have caused his sudden death. There were no Socialists with 'yearnings for equal division of unequal earnings,' men 'who are willing to fork out their penny and pocket your shilling.' The legal axiom of *caveat emptor* did not then apply to our mercantile morality.

A hundred years ago green fields smiled under a blue sky and a buoyant atmosphere where are now grimy factories and an air that is dense and dark enough to be dynamited; wharves and warehouses cover ground that was once dotted with great trees that made islands of grateful shade in a sea of grass. Streams that were once ribbons of liquid light, with dimpling pools and chattering runs, and with water-ouzel's nests in cool crevices, and rivers that erst reflected ferns and wild-flowers and foliage, or had foamy weirs and leisurely water-wheels tossing and splashing prismatic sunlight, are now channels of ink and stink so malodorous that if you were to fall into them you would escape death by drowning only to die from the effects of the poisoned water which you had swallowed during your immersion. In 1798, if our houses were not altogether sanitary, they were, for the most part, substantial and comfortable, and like the 'brave kirk' described by Andrew Fairservice, the shrewd Scottish gardener in *Rob Roy*—'nane o' yer whig-maleeries, and eurlie-wurlies, and open-steek hems about it—a' solid, weel-jointed mason-work, that will stand as lang as the world—keep hands an' gunpowther aff it.' They did not resemble those 'desirable residences' that Mr Jerry, the builder, is speculatively erecting to-day; the frail tenements through whose diaphanous walls one can hear all the domestic transactions that are taking place next door, from the coughing of an invalid to the crying of an infant, the ticking of a clock, the poking of a fire, and the strumming of a piano; 'the very eligible semi-detached villas'—with a strong flavour of putty and Building Society about them—where you may participate (without being present) in family dissensions and family devotions, hear Mrs Caudle's 'curtain lectures,' and the snoring of poor Caudle himself, unsuccessfully simulating sleep, meanwhile his irate spouse, whose very glance is so acutely acidulated that she could pickle enenubers by merely looking at them, proceeds with her nocturnal admonitions.

The working-man's menu in 1798 seldom included butcher's meat. The toilers and moilers did not often have placed before them their rasher of bacon. The rich kept all the feasts; the poor observed all the fasts. Wheat was fifty shillings per quarter. In times of bad harvest agricultural labourers could not get meal to make porridge with, and in some of the worse-off rural districts they ate nothing

but boiled nettles and garden stuff, and even in winter had scarcely anything but stolen turnips. Farmers put steel traps in the mouths of their corn-sacks, and not a few famished men left their fingers 'in chancery.' Very applicable to that penurious period are the words of Tennyson's 'Northern Farmer':

Tis'n them as 'as munny as breäks into 'ouses an' steäls,
Them as 'as coits to their backs an' taäkes their regular
meäls.

Noä, but it's them as niver knaws wheer a meäl's to be
'ad.

Taäke my word for it, Sammy, the poor in a loomp is bad.

But, bad as the times were, there was in aristocratic circles much squandering of money at high play. My lady was as reckless as my lord, and rattled the dice-box and shuffled the cards from dusk till morning, going home with ruined fortunes, in her sedan-chair, when workmen were going home from lathe and loom to breakfast. Family diamonds and jewels and plate were staked when the guineas were exhausted, and when these possessions had gone farms and estates were sacrificed. The amusements, too, of wealthy people were of a coarse and cruel description. Rat-worrying, cock-fighting, and badger-baiting were favourite diversions. Prize-fighting was regarded as essential to keep up the courage of Englishmen. Even the clergy joined in these low and brutal pastimes and neglected their spiritual duties, or cut short a Sunday afternoon service sooner than miss being present at a main of cocks or seeing two men entering the ring for the express purpose of pummelling one another, breaking ribs, damaging noses, knocking out teeth, and cracking jaws. The devotional life of the Church was distinguished by all the dull apathy that prevailed during the Georgian period; the sacred edifices were dormitories for the living as well as of the dead; but the work of Whitefield and the two brothers Wesley had helped to breathe new life into the dry bones of the Establishment. There were sects upon sects, orthodox and unorthodox—Muggletonians and Southcottians, Behmenists and Swedenborgians, Sandemanians and Bereans, Buchanites and believers in Richard Brothers, Moravians, Maxfieldians, and followers of the Countess of Huntingdon.

There was no flaunting, flag-waving jingoism a hundred years ago, but healthy, hearty, patriotic songs of the Charles Dibdin character, which aided the manning of the British navy to a remarkable extent. Short service was unknown in the army, whose stamina was much superior to that of our home army of to-day, with its slight, short lads of deficient physique. The recruits of 1898 are no longer drawn from the rural districts. The healthy yeomen, sinewy and strong, full of bone and firm of flesh, who once filled the ranks of English regular regiments, have been driven off the land by agricultural depression, and gone into

overcrowded and unhealthy towns to make more strenuous the battle for bread.

A hundred years ago there were no temperance societies or Bands of Hope, no Rechabites and Blue Ribbon Army. To be as 'drunk as a lord' was the height of human felicity. It was the age of 'three-bottle men,' of convivial toasts, of drinking-songs. Even the Church indirectly encouraged intemperance. There were certain districts where at Whitsuntide the churchwardens were accustomed to levy contributions of malt from the parishioners. This was brewed into strong ale and sold in the church. The Whitsuntide toppers had, however, a pious method in their madness. The money spent on the beer was expended by the churchwardens in church maintenance, and the muddled roisterers no doubt believed themselves to be pillars of the Church even when, under the influence of its alcohol, they rolled upon its pavement. They thought themselves supporters of the Church when they wanted 'supporting' themselves, and deemed themselves most saintly when they were most soddened. Until as recently as 1827 (when the license was withdrawn) a church and public-house were covered by one roof at Deepdale, midway between Derby and Nottingham. A door that could be opened at will served to separate the consecrated interior of the church from the common taproom of the tavern! Tea-drinking was regarded as one of the feminine vices of a hundred years ago. *The Female Spectator* of that period observes: 'The tea-table costs more to support than would maintain two children at nurse. It is the utter destruction of all economy, the bane of good housewifery, and the source of idleness.'

A hundred years ago there were no institutions for the blind, the deaf and dumb, the paralytic and idiotic. There were few lying-in hospitals, no orphanages, no homes for fallen women, no nurses' institutes, no convalescent homes, no infirmaries for children, no special hospitals for women, for consumption and chest diseases, for fever, for nervous disorders, for epilepsy, paralysis, ophthalmic cases, and eruptions of the skin. The benefits conferred by almshouses went by favour, and charity trusts were most shamefully 'jobbed.' There were no trained nurses, no corps to render 'first aid.' No chloroform or other anæsthetics softened the pain of the operative knife and saw. Lord Lister had not introduced antiseptics into surgery. There were no Röntgen X-rays, with their marvellous surgical, anatomical, and pathological appliances that enable the surgeon to study bone-disease and the detection of foreign bodies in various parts of the human frame. We can now send our hearts as easily as our watches to be cleaned and repaired, and savants can examine by the new photography our inner works, scrutinise our mainsprings, adjust our mechanism, and regulate our movements!

In 1798 there were no Young Men's or Young Women's Christian Associations; no organisation of

charitable work; no emigration schemes. Feeble oil-lamps made the darkness visible, for it was not until 1819 that Rudolph Ackermann's house in London was lighted with gas, and people were wont to walk on the other side of the street so as not to be too near the dangerous combustible. Experimental researches had yet to be made in magnetism. Vaccination had been successfully tried by Jenner, but was as yet little known. Every other person one met was disfigured with the smallpox. Indecent prints abounded. Among the lower classes a low grade of morality prevailed. It was very common for the baptismal service to follow closely the wedding ceremony; while the number of 'chance children'—as illegitimate offspring were called—revealed a shocking state of society.

There were no womanly occupations for women. To-day the avenues of paying employment for females are abundant, and the businesses and professions in which the 'fair sex' may earn money are so prolific as to make the selection of a pursuit quite an embarrassing one. Eve has entered the industrial field in competition with Adam, and he can no longer make fun of the woman's movement. He is confronted with lady doctors, lady journalists, lady typewriters, lady clerks, lady lecturers, lady editors and authors. Very much accentuated nowadays is Tom Moore's couplet:

Disguise our bondage as we will,
'Tis woman, woman rules us still.

Many things that are now accessible to the poorest were a century ago only within reach of the rich. Articles that were regarded as luxuries are now looked upon as every-day necessities. Only too often the stomachs of 'hands' in towns and hinds in villages, like Oliver Twist, asked 'for more.' The New World did not redress the food-balance of the Old. The frozen flesh and fruit of Australia, and the grain and other produce of Canada and the United States, belonged to the future.

'*Sanitas scripturarum omnia sanitas*' was a maxim that had not been recognised by the legislature.

The common people had no inkling of the great Palmerstonian truth that 'dirt is matter in its wrong place.' There were no boards of health, no inspectors of nuisances, no sanitary appliances. Disinfectants and chloride of lime would have been regarded with apprehension. It might have been said:

The cottago homes of England,
How fearfully they smell!
There's fever in the cesspool
And sewage in the well.

There was no scientific farming; no Minister of Agriculture; old-world methods of tilling the soil, almost as primitive as those of Triptolemus, with his wooden plough and yoke of bullocks, prevailed. The crops were treated very differently to the manner in which they are treated to-day, when there are patented machines for winnowing and tedding, and reaping, and mowing, and threshing; when we do not even allow our horses to take rough hay into their mouths, but chop it up and refine it for them until it can be comfortably masticated in delicate morsels.

A list as long as Leporello's catalogue, or an Irish law-suit, or a Corsican feud, and as varied as a bill of lading, or an auctioneer's inventory, or a railway company's lost luggage advertisement, might be made of 'Things that have Come In' during the last hundred years; while an enumeration of 'Things that have Gone Out' would make a very comprehensive schedule.

The Present has distanced the Past both in science and art, mechanical appliances, and material advances in such a marked manner that it is not worth while to place them. Eclipse is first, and the rest nowhere. The rate of mortality tells its own tale. It shows—as Lord Macaulay points out—that people live longer now, because they are better fed, better lodged, better clothed, and better attended in sickness. Capital has found its most lucrative course; commodities command their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, and idleness and folly their proper punishment.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

By THOMAS ST E. HAKE.

CHAPTER IX.—SUSPECTED.

JARVIS grasped his hand-bag and started up from his seat. All sense of fatigue was gone. He stepped briskly across the waiting-room; but before he could reach the door it was opened from the outside, and Lawyer Burtenshaw came in.

'John? The very man I'm looking for. Why, what's the matter?'

'Didn't you see him?' was John's counter-question.

Mr Burtenshaw nodded. 'I saw him,' said he in an underbreath. 'Let him be. He's going home.'

'Going home? But'—

'Let him be,' Mr Burtenshaw reiterated, laying his hand on John's arm; 'let him go home.'

If Lawyer Burtenshaw had said, 'I've weaved

the web; let him entangle himself in the meshes,' his meaning could not have been made clearer to Jarvis. He had hardly spoken when the train for Cablethorpe came into the station.

'My gig's outside,' said Mr Burtenshaw. 'I'll drive you to the cross-roads. You'll be home before the fellow, or, at any rate, nearly as soon. Come.'

There was no time for vacillation. Jarvis promptly decided.

'I'll go with you,' said he.

Jarvis took his seat in the gig beside Mr Burtenshaw, and they went flying along the highway. The railway-station was about midway between this spot and the town of Cablethorpe. Night hung over the fenland like a pall.

'You know why Gabriel Beek is going home?' said Mr Burtenshaw.

'No. And yet,' said Jarvis suddenly, 'I suspect— Did you see the look he gave me?'

'What was it like?' said the lawyer evasively. 'Fiendish!'

Mr Burtenshaw burst into a fit of laughter. With a startled turn of the head Jarvis glanced round; but he could see nothing of the lawyer's features, merely the dimmest outline of his figure in the gloom.

'Not bad, John,' Mr Burtenshaw answered, recovering himself. 'Not bad. I suspect you're right.'

The shriek of a railway-engine struck upon their ears, and the distant rumble of a train echoed across the fens.

'Mr Burtenshaw,' said Jarvis, 'this may be the last chance I have of talking to you, except'—

'What! You don't seriously think you're threatened, do you?'

'Threatened? Why, no. I was thinking at the moment,' said John, 'about that mortgage. Give yourself no further trouble'—

Mr Burtenshaw touched John's shoulder. 'Excuse me. But was it wise to bring the sum with you in that bag?'

'What do you mean?'

'Why, my friend,' said the lawyer, 'do you think I'm blind? I guessed when I saw you alight from the London train at the junction what you'd been to town about; and the way you caught up your bag when that fellow Gabriel appeared at the waiting-room window confirmed my surmise. So you're going to throw me over, John, are you?'

'I am going to try,' said John.

Again the shriek of the engine was heard. Next moment the glare as of a huge incandescent fire came creeping through the night, keeping, as it appeared, in a parallel line with the light from Mr Burtenshaw's gig lamps. The space between the lights may have been a mile or more, and they had the appearance of carrying on a race, the goal being Cablethorpe. The lights of the town were visible two miles or

more ahead. No further words were exchanged between the men until Mr Burtenshaw drew up at the 'Cross' inn, at a corner of the cross-roads. Almost at the same time the train came to a stop at the station before Cablethorpe.

'You'll reach home first after all,' the lawyer predicted.

Jarvis stepped down into the road.

'You're not afraid of him?' said the lawyer.

'Gabriel Beek? Not I.'

'Well, good-night.'

Jarvis struck into the road for Cablethorpe. The gig lights flew along the road at right angles; and presently the engine lights moved out of the station. As Jarvis hastened on his way in the darkness, the lights on either side of him kept in sight.

There was some one at Cablethorpe at this moment of the night who watched anxiously for John's coming. It was Ruth. She was lying upon the sofa in the little parlour, as she was wont to do more frequently of late, by no light but the light of the fire. Since the night upon which Jarvis had saved Tudway's life, her hope that John might realise how futile it was to think of Hettie had begun to revive. Would he ever think of her—ever gain the faintest conception how deep was her love for him?

She listened for his footsteps. The hour had surely gone by when the last train from London is due at Cablethorpe. John had sent Hettie a telegram that afternoon: 'All goes well; shall return to-night.' He was a man upon whom one might rely implicitly.

Still no footstep in the timber-yard reached her ear. Ruth began to grow restless. Yet, stay! what was that? The sound of a footstep at last—a footstep in the yard that she instantly recognised. But not John's quick, energetic tread. It was a slow, heavy tread; it was the step of her truant brother Gabriel.

Ruth sank back like one who loses all volition. His shadow was at this moment thrown across the windows by the light from the office opposite. He was entering by the back way—coming home as it had always been his habit to come—without sign or warning. His step was in the passage now; and in another moment the parlour door opened, and Gabriel Beek came slouching in. He flung himself into an arm-chair beside the fire with an air of weariness, without looking round him. Had he looked about the room, as any stranger would have done, he would possibly have seen Ruth crouching on the sofa in the uncertain light. She lay there hardly breathing, with her large bright eyes fixed wonderingly upon him.

It was her dream. Ruth recalled every detail of it, just as she had related it to Hettie when awakened upon the first night of the terrible storm. His face and figure were fitfully lit up

by the wreck-wood fire. It gave an expression to his face of grim, silent laughter. Whether he was dressed like a tramp, or whether his clothes were begrimed with mud, she could not determine; but she almost expected, as the moments went by, to see him take a bundle of bank-notes from his pocket, as she had seen him in her dream, and send them fluttering over the blaze like so many bits of useless flimsy.

But nothing of the sort happened. Gabriel settled himself comfortably in the chair, as Ruth had often seen him do after a day from home, and fell fast asleep. She recovered volition. The painful sense of being without power of speech or motion left her. She rose and went softly from the room, and hurried out to look for Hettie. As she crossed the yard she caught sight of Tudway through the window of the timber warehouse. He was seated upon some planks near a stove, smoking his pipe. He came to her at the door, leaning on his stick. There was a lantern in his hand. He noticed that she was breathless and unusually pale.

'Gabriel has come home,' she whispered. 'Where is Hettie?'

'Isn't she in the office?'

'No'—and Ruth peered over her shoulder—'the lights in the office are out.'

Tudway consulted his watch. 'Why, it's half-past eleven.'

'Half-past eleven?' cried Ruth. 'John should have been back long ago.'

They regarded each other with anxious looks.

'Come,' said Tudway, 'let's go and speak to Gabriel.'

Ruth took the lantern, and led the way into the house. Tudway followed. When they entered the parlour they were surprised to find Hettie standing over the fire in a thoughtful attitude, and alone.

'Have you seen him?' said Ruth, still in a whisper.

'Yes. Gabriel is tired,' said Hettie, who showed no sign of uneasiness; 'he has gone to his room. I have not questioned him about himself,' she added, noticing Ruth's uneasy look, however; 'he's not in the mood to-night. You know how taciturn and stubborn he is at the best of times.'

'Did he come by train?' said Tudway.

Hettie had not inquired.

'But, Hettie, you might at least have asked him,' said Ruth, 'whether he had seen anything of John.'

While she spoke the gate-bell clanged loudly. Ruth, who still held the lantern in her hand, went out. Her heart beat fast, for she was seized with a sudden dread that something had happened to Jarvis, and that some one had come in haste to break the news. She opened the little doorway in the gate and looked out.

A tall man, in a heavy driving-coat, and muffled

up to his eyes in a woollen scarf, stood before her. A gig was being led under the archway into the stable-yard of the 'Jolly Bacchus.' Ruth raised the lantern and peered into his face.

It was Lawyer Burtenshaw.

'How d'ye do, Miss Ruth?' said he in his most plausible manner. 'Is our friend at home?'

'Who?'

'John Jarvis. I want particularly to see him.'

'We are expecting him. He went to London,' said Ruth, 'this morning. We are expecting him every minute.'

'Not back yet? Why, I met him at Willoughby Junction a couple of hours ago, and—'

'Met him at Willoughby Junction?'

'Yes. Let me in,' said the lawyer; 'let me in.'

He brushed by her, and hastened across the timber-yard towards the house. Ruth went quickly after him. As they came in Hettie stepped forward. 'What is the matter?' she asked.

Mr Burtenshaw stood up in front of the fire with his usual air of proprietorship, and said: 'I've no wish to alarm you, but I'm afraid John has been rather foolhardy to-night.'

Ruth had seated herself in such a position that she could study Mr Burtenshaw's face without being observed by him. She rested her elbows on the table, and shaded her face with her hand, for she feared to betray the intense anxiety his words were causing her.

'It has never been a secret that I know of,' the lawyer went on, 'that John Jarvis and your brother Gabriel are at daggers drawn. While your father was alive, Miss Beek, there was no open quarrel between them. Since his death they've kept apart. But they met again to-night.'

'Where?'

'At Willoughby Junction. No word was spoken between them,' said Mr Burtenshaw, 'but I saw them looking at each other through the waiting-room window—John within, Gabriel outside. I instantly perceived the danger. Gabriel's look was angry. I was warned, and I hastened to carry John off in my gig. Then—he glanced searchingly round the room—I left him at the cross-roads.'

Hettie betrayed signs of growing restlessness.

'Miss Beek,' the lawyer resumed, 'when you tell me that Jarvis has not come home, and I think of the ill-feeling that has existed for years between the two men, I fully realise the mistake I have made. I can't think what possessed me when I let John go one step alone. It was thoughtless in the extreme. When I had driven a mile or two I got fidgety. I turned back, but I saw nothing of him along the road. What can have become of him?'

For a moment no word was spoken. Mr Burtenshaw buttoned his coat tightly about him.

'John had a big sum of money with him, as I've no doubt you know,' said he, 'and in my opinion he has been robbed and—— Well, we shall see. When I recall the look on your brother Gabriel's face as he watched John through the window at Willoughby Junction, my suspicions seem almost confirmed.'

Ruth's head dropped upon her arm. The lawyer's words had roused terror at her heart. Mr Burtenshaw went out; and Tudway and Hettie, after speaking together in a whisper, followed him to the 'Bacchus' inn. The awful thought had crossed Ruth's mind that Gabriel, in the hatred he had fostered for Jarvis for years past, had now waylaid him along the lonely fenland road, and had struck him down. It was the thing he had threatened to do. She recalled his look, his angry words, at Nelson Square.

She sat drooping there, faint from a sense of sickening horror at the very thought of what might have happened. But when her strength returned she rose quickly; and, to her surprise, she saw her brother Gabriel standing upon the hearth-rug, where Lawyer Burtenshaw had stood a few minutes ago, with his look bent curiously upon her. The moment she fixed her startled eyes upon him, he turned away his head and looked down.

The lantern which Ruth had brought in with her still remained on the table at her side. She took it up, and hurried towards the door.

'Stop!' said Gabriel, suddenly looking up. 'What's that crowd about outside the "Bacchus"? The noise they're making woke me up. I saw

that scoundrel Burtenshaw among them. What does it all mean?'

Ruth had opened the door while he still spoke, and the sound of many voices, echoing in the timber-yard, struck upon her ear.

'Ask yourself what it means,' said she.

Gabriel stepped quickly towards her and caught her by the wrist.

'I will be answered!'

Ruth trembled with horror at her brother's touch.

'John has been robbed—murdered, for all we can tell—by some one, between Cablethorpe and the "Cross" inn.'

'When?'

'An hour ago.'

'Who did it?'

'You know best.'

'I?'

'Was it not you?' said Ruth.

Gabriel loosened his hold upon her wrist, and staggered back as though he had received a stab. The moment she was released Ruth ran out. He saw the flash of her lantern at the window as she crossed the yard, and then the voices of the crowd outside the 'Jolly Bacchus'—angry voices, as they seemed to him—again smote upon his ear.

He was being pursued. This was Lawyer Burtenshaw's doing. That was Gabriel's thought, and the look of a demon crossed his face. Then he raised the window-sash and climbed out; and in a moment he had dropped noiselessly into the yard beneath. He went over a foot-bridge into a field; and here he struck into a narrow pathway beside a broad dike, and was soon lost in the darkness.

STEAM LINE-FISHING.



HE comparatively new industry of steam line-fishing is, as far as its methods of working are concerned, probably little understood by the majority of consumers of fish-food; most people's idea of line-fishing being the operation as carried on by the small yawls, the crews of which put out to sea for a few hours only, returning from their short voyage with a glittering freight of fresh and caller fish. The steam line-boats, on the contrary, are handsomely equipped vessels, the latest specimens being of some 120 tons gross register, and built of steel, to class 100 A1 at Lloyd's. The engines are compound surface condensing, of 300 indicated horse-power, with a steel multitubular boiler, having a working pressure of 140 lb. steam. These boats are fitted with fish-rooms, shelved for about eighty score of cod, ling, and halibut; ponds on deck for skate and saith, &c.; ice-rooms to hold from four to five

tons; and bunkers capable of holding some forty tons of coal, sufficient for a three weeks' cruise. The cabin accommodation is of the most comfortable description, and the vessels are ketch-rigged, and furnished with a strong seaworthy boat and all necessary appliances for use in cases of emergency. Each vessel carries from 4000 to 5000 hooks attached to many miles of lines. The cost of each of these steam-liners would be from £2500 to £3000. Although the work of baiting so many hooks and casting out and hauling in so many miles of lines is a very arduous one, requiring hours of constant labour in the twenty-four, not to speak of the storing of the fish in layers of ice, the vessels are kept in perfect order by the fishermen, more especially the beautiful machinery of the engine-rooms. The bill of fare is of the best, and a good cook is kept on every boat. The crew consists generally of seven or eight men, including the skipper.

A word as to the financing of these boats may not be unacceptable. The early system of financing the improved vessels which succeeded the small and crude steam-liners of eight or ten years ago was in some ways unsatisfactory to the fishermen who engaged in it. As the new method caught on, however, and the fishermen began to get interested in it, those of them who had spare capital by them, as fishermen generally have, joined in the purchase of a boat, sharing the profits among themselves after defraying all expenses of coals, oil, bait, &c., as well as the wages of engineer and fireman, from the proceeds of the sale of fish. The results have in many instances been eminently satisfactory, some of the boats having been estimated to have cleared in a year an average profit of from £500 to £700 on the original outlay of, say, £3000, after all expenses were paid—not a bad income as incomes go in these days for each of the five or six fishermen. Even when their capital was insufficient for the purchase of a boat, as was not unusual in the case of the younger men, service on a steam-liner they found to be more remunerative, safer, and more comfortable than was their former experience on board the yawls. As to the popularity of steam line-fishing among the fishermen themselves, frequent interviews with line-fishermen, not only in several of the villages of Kincardineshire, such as Findon, Portlethen, Muchals, Newtonhill, and Cove, as well as the skippers and men of boats at Aberdeen Fish Market, leave no shadow of doubt. Both men and women too have spoken with enthusiasm of the benefits of service on board steam line-boats, and the speedy extinction as fishing centres of the east-coast villages.

When asked the reason of such depopulation, the line-fishers give the harbour, the market, the auction sales, the fine steam line-boats ('line' boats, be it noted, *not* trawlers), as powerful enough attractions to draw all the young men and the middle-aged to Aberdeen to 'better themselves' with the rest, and share the luck that is going. The women too participate in the advantages of steam line-fishing. The weary and toilsome drudgery which erstwhile had to be undertaken by the womenfolk of the hardy toilers of the deep, such as curing the fish and carrying them about the country or into town in creels, which ordinary men, not to say women, could hardly lift; and the wading into the sea up to the neck for bait, &c. (all of which required a lifelong training—that being, in fact, the reason why fishermen as a rule marry only within their own class), are not required of the wives of steam line-fishermen. Now the fish are at once given into the hands of the salesmen, the bait is supplied wholesale by the owners, or, in the case of herring-bait, caught by the fishermen far out at sea, and the fish are cured and converted into 'Finnan' and other 'haddies' in the curers' yards with all up-to-date aids to labour. The picturesque fisherwife, with her many-

tucked petticoat, high-peaked mutch, and creel, will soon be a thing of the past. The tendency towards centralisation has been noted in the *Fishery Board Reports* for a year or two past. In the report for 1895 the reasons given are the 'proximity of the large ports to the fishing-grounds, the facilities for landing fish in good condition, and the rapid means of communication with the great industrial centres.' The report goes on to say that the 'larger boats are necessary owing to the increased demand for the better kinds of fish, which usually frequent only the off-shore grounds.' It will be seen from this remark that the yawls could never satisfy the increasing demand for fish-food, the exportation of which from Aberdeen has been promoted by the combined agencies of steam and electricity. In fact, without these modern miracle-workers the fish-trade could never have assumed its present magnificent proportions.

The 1,000,000 cwt. of fish, representing a money value of £400,000, which was the net result of last year's fishing at Aberdeen, would, had yawls been the only boats in use, for the most part have lived their lives unmolested at the bottom of the cold North Sea. In the report of the Board for 1896 are evidences of the same falling off, especially in the Aberdeen and Kincardineshire districts. 'Boats land their catches at Aberdeen,' is the usual report from east-coast villages; and under 'Findon' we find the sadly suggestive remark: 'The last of the Findon fishermen removed to Stonehaven' during the year. The proposal which has been made that the Fishery Board should erect harbours at small fishing villages does not commend itself to the judgment of those who have made fishery matters a subject of thoughtful consideration in view of the fact that, as last report truly says, 'fishermen of all classes will be certain to locate themselves at those ports where they can have the greatest facilities for landing their catches and disposing of them to the best advantage.'

It is only at large ports, such as Aberdeen, that daily supplies can be depended on to keep up the trade; and it is only large centres that can meet the demands for providing coals, stores, and ice, not to speak of the necessary repairs which are always wanted in connection with fishing-vessels, and which keep the builders busy. The depopulation of small villages and the overcrowding of large towns is regrettable; but in the fish trade it is inevitable.

One great difficulty in the way of the success of steam line-fishing is the supply of bait. It may not be generally known outside the industry that from the New Year on to September herring-bait is used on board the steam line-boats, the crews being supplied during the first three months with herring from some of the southern ports. From April till about September they take nets along with them, and fish for herring-bait for

themselves; during the remaining three months they have to use squid-bait. It has been abundantly demonstrated that there is no bait in its season equal to squid or ink-fish. These fish, or rather sea monstrosities, are brought up by the trawl in abundance, but are seldom, if ever, caught on the lines, which may be one reason for their scarcity. Another reason which is noted in the report is the migratory habits of the ink-fish. In this connection a singular fact was observed by the herring fishermen last season, which, it will be remembered, was a very disastrous one on the east coast. One of our most experienced curers, who resides for the most part in one of the towns on the Morayshire coast, remarked to the writer that last season squid were more plentiful than he had ever seen them all his time of curing, so that he thought it without precedent. He further said that when squid appear, herrings disappear; in fact, it was his experience on the west coast that it is certain death to the herring if squid appear. So much for the 'glorious uncertainty' of the fish trade. In the winter of 1896-7 the ink-fish were scarcely to be had for love

or money. Last winter (1897-8) they were plentiful, and bait was within the reach of all.


It is a fact worthy of notice that a few years ago ink-fish were thrown overboard as rubbish; now they are, when scarce, almost priceless; and even last winter the cost of bait was the heaviest part of the expenditure in connection with line-fishing. The previous winter the cost frequently exceeded the profits of the trip—a state of matters which could not go on. Various attempts have been made to find a substitute for squid-bait, but hitherto without success.

The failure of the Newfoundland imported squid last year will be fresh in the memory of those interested in fishery matters. There is no doubt that a fortune awaits the man who discovers a satisfactory substitute for squid-bait. Each hundredweight box of squid costs at least £2.

In conclusion it may be said that the line-fishermen, if they are to succeed in steam-vessels, must add enterprise and energy to their recognised industry, and, throwing aside class and traditional fads and superstition, endeavour to march with the times.

THE BIRTHDAY PEARL.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY.

T'S my birthday,' said Bob Panton, master and owner of the pearl-shell lugger *Daisy*, then lying at anchor off Somerset on her return from a trip about Torres Straits. 'It's my birthday,' repeated he, bringing out a 'square-face' of Hollands. 'We'll have a nip all round, and then we'll open a shell each, just for fun, and to see what sort of luck I'm to have this next year.'

The five blacks and the one other white man that constituted the *Daisy's* crew duly drank the skipper's health in half-pints; and then, laughing, each man chose the biggest oyster he could find—all about the size of soup-plates.

Four were blanks, and they all watched Abdallah, the new hand, as he slowly opened the great bivalve. Then came a shout as he presently held up a pearl, pear-shaped and almost as big as a hazel-nut, the finest gem on record yet found in those seas.

'Good luck indeed!' quoth Bob Panton as the chorus of admiration subsided, and, pulling out a bundle of ten dirty one-pound notes, he handed them over to Abdallah, saying, 'Take these for yourself, lad. I'll double it if this turns out as A1 as it looks.'

'And now I'll get up another square-face, and we'll wet the little stranger properly, and christen it the "Birthday Pearl." And they did so to such purpose that, bar Abdallah, there was no sober man on the *Daisy* by eight bells that night.

In the morning, when Captain Bob Panton came on deck, Abdallah was missing. So, as presently discovered, was the big pearl that Panton had left in a small wooden box in his berth. So was the *Daisy's* dingy that had been towing astern.

Bob Panton sold his shell, and offered a reward of £50 for the thief. But, though all the southern police were put on the *qui vive*, nothing could be heard of the Birthday Pearl nor of Abdallah. And at last there were people found who did not scruple to hint at birthday hallucinations, born of 'square gin,' on the part of Captain Bob and his crew.

But Panton took the matter to heart, and got on the spree; spent his shell-money, and more; sold his boat, pulled himself together, and started off in pursuit of Abdallah, with ever before his vision the virgin sheen of the great pearl, his for a few hours only, convinced that until he recovered it luck for him, either in this world or the next, was out of the question.

When old widower Wilhelm Itzig, the watch-maker and jeweller at Port Leichardt, died, his native-born son, Hermann, came home from a wandering life of droving and working upon stations, and, returning to the trade he had been taught, mended the Leichardt clocks and watches with an indifferent measure of success, being at best but a botch.

The little shanty, dignified with the title of

shop, stood apart from the rest of the township, and quite close to the beach. And but for an old tin sign, with upon it 'Hermann Itzig, working jeweller,' and an old clock and three empty watch-cases in the window, there was nothing to distinguish it from any of the other straggling 'humpies' that went to make up the nearly deserted Queensland seaport.

'How much, John?' Hermann was asking of a half-starved, unkempt-looking black man, a fortnight after the finding and losing of the Birthday Pearl, shivering mildly now in the gloom of the stuffy little inner room of the shop by the beach.

'Won 'undreed, two 'undreed-feeefectee, sar,' replied Abdallah, eyeing the gem as Hermann rolled it to and fro in the palm of his hand.

'Don't you wish you may get it, my boy,' replied Hermann, laughing. 'Ask a thousand whilst you're about it, John. Why don't you?'

'Ver' fine pul, sar,' replied Abdallah, eringing. 'Some day get mooch more dan t'ousan' for 'im.'

And young Hermann, although knowing little of such matters, thought, as he noted its soft lustre and flawless shape, that possibly his customer might be right.

His hand closed on the pearl. Said he, 'I'll give you twenty. Haven't got another cent anyhow'—which was the truth.

But Abdallah raised his eyes and hands to heaven in mute appeal at such an offer.

'You'll either take that or nothing,' said Hermann, suddenly producing a revolver and pointing it straight at the other's head. 'You stole it, you beggar; you know you did, up the coast somewhere—Thursday Island or Somerset, likely. Here, think yourself lucky to get so much.' And Hermann handed over four five-pound notes.

'Take them,' said he, seeing that the other made no motion, 'or I'll have you up to the police barracks in a quarter less than no time!'

There was murder in Abdallah's eye. But he put out his hand.

'Now clear straight out,' said Hermann. 'There's the *Barcoo* alongside the wharf. If you take my advice you'll get away in her. So long, old man!'

As he turned away, putting down the pistol, Abdallah sprang on him like a tiger, drawing his sheath-knife as he did so—for he was clad like any coasting sailor, in a suit of belted dungaree. Hermann reeled and fell, the knife descended again and again as Abdallah struck in his blind rage, and presently the body underneath him grew limp and motionless.

Rising and striking a match—for night was coming on, and the small room was nearly in darkness—Abdallah searched until he saw the Birthday Pearl lying near the bed, gleaming up at him out of a little pool of blood.

Wiping it on the blankets, also his knife, he turned and fled towards the long jetty where lay

the s.s. *Barcoo*, already clanging her second bell, a better man by twenty pounds than when he entered Leichardt that night, with a useless fortune in his pocket.

Next morning, somebody coming into the shop with a Waterbury to mend found Hermann lying senseless and nearly dead from loss of blood. None of the wounds, however, had touched any vital part; and a month in the local hospital restored him to health again. For reasons of his own, he had professed himself unable to give any description of the assassin. Illicit pearl-buyers on that coast were looked upon with great disfavour, for the reason that every inhabitant who could afford it had shares in some venture connected with the fishery—that is, the pearl-shell fleet. The pearls themselves were but a by-blow of the industry—conspicuous more by their rarity, except in the shape of almost worthless 'seel,' than anything else.

But the glamour of the big gem had entered into Hermann's soul, as it had into Panton's and into Abdallah's; and presently, selling out his stock for a few pounds, he too moved on in pursuit, impelled, to boot, by a sharp feeling of revenge for loss of blood and money.

Meanwhile Abdallah, journeying southward, made no more attempts to dispose of his treasure. But, sewing it in a little bag of black calico, he hid it away artistically in the meshes of his thick hair, where with a touch he could assure himself of its safety. He was a man who had travelled far, and knew many things—knew more than Panton or Itzig; but travel had not shut out inherent superstition. And he began to look upon the big pearl as a charm, an amulet, that, worn always, would protect him and bring him much good fortune. At various times, in the absence of any distinguishing marks of caste or dress, he had been taken for a Malay, a Hindu, and a Kanaka.

But Abdallah was none of these. He was an Arab from Muscat, who had in his time worked amongst the rotting oyster-heaps of El Bouruk on the shores of the Persian Gulf, had seen big pearls, and possessed a fair notion of their value. Hence he was well aware that he had a prize that would make a sensation in the world, and one whose owner would be unable to hide his light under a bushel—so far as the police, at least, were concerned.

Nor did he imagine for a moment that Panton would sit down quietly under his loss. Of Hermann he thought no more—dead men tell no tales.

So he travelled round to Adelaide, thence by sea up Spence's Gulf to Port Augusta, where he joined the camel-trains of Hafiz Khan, the rich Afghan who brought the wool down from the arid interior to the tall ships lying in the river.

Into Sydney shortly came Hermann Itzig, with

the desire for vengeance still hot, but purse low. His guarded inquiries soon let him into the knowledge that the police were on the watch, and had at least twenty men shadowed on suspicion, and waiting the arrival of Panton.

Seeing that so far as his own claim was concerned the case was hopeless, he gave it up. But not until he had satisfied himself that Abdallah was not in the city did he for a time relinquish the hope of getting even with him for that little matter of the knifing in the hut by the Leichardt beach.

Later, falling in with two of his countrymen bound for the West Australian goldfields, he joined them. The trio were lucky, and made each a fair pile. After a hurried visit to the Fatherland, which he left also hurriedly, convinced that for the Australian-born a military despotism was a most unsuitable form of government, Hermann Itzig, returning, bought a station 'up north' in South Australia, and after a while began to prosper considerably. But often to him came dreams of the big pearl, shining with its mild and tender light as he had last seen it—an episode in his life that, but for certain pains of frosty mornings, he might have almost come to regard as apocryphal. A stern, resolute man, he was incapable of forgetting an injury; and ever and anon, principally in the winter, he sent agents to work to hunt up Abdallah, meaning, when found, to deal with him after his own fashion.

But when a black man, or a yellow, chooses to hide himself amongst others of his colour, the search is apt to linger and become monotonous.

And so Bob Panton found it.

Received by the police with open arms and a whole tribe of dusky nomads—Manila-men, Kanakas, Javanese, men from the spurs of the Hindu Kush, others from the palm-groves of Kandy and the plains of Central India—he could identify none of them. The police had done their best, stimulated by the reward. But the vagueness of the description baffled them. There were so many black men with sharp aquiline features and good teeth, who spoke very little English, and usually wore European clothes. And at last they gave it up as a bad job. So also did the authorities in Melbourne and Adelaide; whither Bob Panton journeyed on his quest, with hopes growing weaker and weaker.

Superstitious in his way as Abdallah, he had quite made up his mind that unless he recovered his Birthday Pearl, no luck would ever again cross his path in this world nor, possibly, in the next; and, strong in his belief, he spent every penny he possessed in the fruitless search, finding himself at last 'on the wallaby' with a swag upon his back—he, Bob Panton, once master and owner of the smartest little lugger around Torres Straits.

Fain would he have returned once more to his old haunts on the Queensland coast; but he well knew how useless that would be, penniless as he was. And he had seen enough of beach-combing in his day, so had no stomach for that game.

And he worked about from station to station under an assumed name, with the splendid memory of his loss abiding ever upon him, until what preachers call the 'finger of Providence,' and lesser men 'luck,' brought him to Weetah, which was the name of Itzig's station, far to northward of the Burra.

Here there was a drought prevailing, and men were sinking wells. Panton knew little about the business; but, falling in with a mate who did, he took a contract to put a well down on an out-of-the-way part of the run known as the Sandalwood Ridge.

They struck water at a shallow depth, much to Itzig's delight. Then they built a hut for a shepherd and yards for the sheep, laid troughing, and made everything ready. And, just as they finished, there came a rainfall measurable in feet.

But Panton, in place of leaving, took other work on the run; whilst at Sandalwood the water stood undisturbed, and tall grass grew about hut and troughs, and the yards fell to decay, for nobody ever went that way now feed and water were so plentiful elsewhere.

Meanwhile Abdallah, earning good wages as a first-class driver, made money on the camel-train; and presently, leaving Hafiz Khan, he bought a tilted cart and two horses, and took out a hawker's license, and began life on his own account, secure in the strength and continuance of his luck.

He wore the pearl, now in a little leather bag, hung round his neck by a silver chain. And he worshipped it as his god. Nothing but good fortune had been his since the night he had sneaked into the *Daisy's* cabin whilst the drunken snores of her crew broke the still air, and taken the gem—his own: had he not found it?—from off the cabin table.

And ever since then had he not thriven—thriven until his outlandish signature was beginning to be known at the big bank in King William Street almost as well as that of Hafiz Khan?

And when at rare intervals he allowed his eyes to feast on the soft, lucent iridescence of the wonderful talisman, his belief grew stronger than ever that his *Kismet* was bound up therein; and that, compared to the power and magic of his treasure, Allah and all his works were as naught. And, indeed, Abdallah had long ago abjured the teachings of his Prophet, conforming to the demands of Australian inland civilisation in the matters of drinking rum, smoking, swearing, and

eating flesh, both clean and unclean, with the utmost indifference—exactly the same as any Christian.

So utter was his faith in the efficacy of the gem that if any slight mishap befell, such as the losing of his horses or the breaking of a spoke, he ascribed it to his inconsiderate attempt at Leichardt to get rid of it to the young man whose body had made a sheath for his knife. It was a punishment meted out to him by his divinity.

Many months passed away; he made money, and travelled far and wide. Then, in an evil hour for himself, he travelled still farther, and fell into a trap set, all unwittingly, for him by two men whom he had injured, and from which all the power of the Birthday Pearl was unable to save him. One hot summer day, making for Weetah head-station, he lost his bearings, and at sundown, he and his horses being parched with thirst, was very pleased to strike the Sandalwood Ridge, with its covered well of still water, sheltering hut, and abundance of feed.

'I think,' remarked Hermann Itzig to his overseer a month or two afterwards, 'that we may as well, perhaps, put a flock at the Sandalwood.'

'Very well, sir,' replied the overseer. 'I'll send Bray here out to do up the hut and yards.'

'I'll drive him out,' said Hermann. 'He's one of the men who worked there, isn't he? I want to have a look round. See that the big water-bag's on the buggy. I don't suppose the stuff in the well's any too good by this time.'

'What's that?' asked Itzig of Bray, *alias* Panton, as, at the end of their twenty-mile drive, they caught sight of something white and round close to the well.

'Tilted cart, I should say,' replied the other, peering under the flat of his hand.

As they drove up, two big eagle-hawks and some crows flew off the carcasses of a couple of dead horses.

Close to the door lay another corpse—that of a man—a man with strips of dry black flesh hanging from his bones.

'Great heaven!' exclaimed Itzig, 'what's the matter here?' But Panton made no answer. He was staring intently at the shrivelled features of the dead man. As he gazed he saw something shine from between the skeleton fingers of one clenched hand. Stooping, he drew it out with a cry of astonishment—the great pearl, Abdallah's god, appealed to in vain during his last agony.

'My pearl!' exclaimed Hermann.

'No—mine!' said Panton. 'My Birthday Pearl that Abdallah here stole from me!'

'Are you Panton, then?' asked Hermann.

'Yes,' replied Bob, 'I am. But what do you know about the matter?'

Then Hermann told his story, waiving all rights, if any belonged by reason of the wounds

that ached yet in the winter mornings. He could afford to. But what had killed man and horses?

There was a little water left in the bottom of the well-bucket. Hermann tasted it, shook his head, and spat it out. Alongside the bucket lay a native eat, dead. At the troughs, dry now, were others; also crows, all dead.

'I prefer our own water,' said he. 'Empty the whisky out of that bottle in the buggy, and fill it from the well. I'll fix this stuff up when we get home. That pearl's worth a lot of money. A good day's work for you. And for me too, perhaps, if my notion turns out correct. Copper's not so low as it was.'

Analysis disclosed the secret. The well had been bottomed on a very rich vein of copper ore. The water had become so impregnated with the mineral as to become highly poisonous. A thirsty man and thirsty horses might as well have drunk a strong decoction of arsenic.

It required a deal of persuasion to make Panton part with his pearl. Even as Abdallah, he was minded to make a fetish of the thing—it was so pure-looking, and shone with such a mild graciousness, that it seemed very hard to relinquish possession of it. Also, it was his birthday gift, and was bound to bring him luck.

But at last wiser counsels prevailed. Messrs Storr & Mortimer gave £2500 for it, and with this money Panton bought a partnership in Weetah. The lode at 'Poison Well' may be worked yet. At present prices it might pay. And what eventually became of the Birthday Pearl I know not. I note, however, that at the last London wool sales Messrs Itzig & Panton's clip averaged the top price of the season.

THE LATER FLOWERS.

THE elder's blooms are flat and fair;
The ox-eyed daisy's in the grass;
And shepherd's-rods, in meekness, stare
From every hedgerow as we pass;
While bees have mournful notes which tell
Of summer's fullness and farewell!

Ah me! I watched the shining hours,
From early crocus till the may
Was spent in whiteness o'er the bowers,
And gorses glorified the way!
Now later blooms of sadness stand
In pitying glory o'er the land.

How sober is the summer's prime!
How sad her close! How deep the fire
That heralds blossoms of the time!
Amid their glow we gain desire,
And pray that life's declining hour
May hold such wealth of fruit and flower!

WM. JOSEPH GALLAGHER.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



PENAL SENTENCES.

By Major-General Sir EDMUND F. DU CANE, K.C.B.

IN considering the treatment to which convicted prisoners should be subjected while undergoing their sentences it is necessary first to settle what should be the object to be aimed at. There can be no doubt of the answer which would have been given to this question from the beginning of the world's history until a comparatively short time ago. It is expressed in the doctrine that the ruler of any country should be 'a terror to evil-doers'—that is, that those who are tempted to break the law should have a wholesome dread of the consequences to themselves as a check upon such inclinations. To this end severe corporal punishment, death, or mutilation was inflicted; or, if the offender was cast into prison, it was perhaps an underground pit, in darkness and deprived of every comfort and convenience of life, 'fed with the bread of affliction and the water of affliction.'

This, then, is one—and the oldest—answer to the question, and till about one hundred years ago it was considered the only one.

There are some who hold that a righteous vengeance is the justification for the infliction of the punishment; and if so, it must naturally enter into the question of treatment. It is probable that in old days this may have been accepted as a sound principle, and no doubt private revenge and judicial revenge were very much mixed up. The doctrine of 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth' implies that the penalty should be equivalent to the injury done by the offender, which may be considered one version of the idea of vengeance. But the treatment that strikes terror sufficiently carries out the desire for vengeance, so that the distinction was of little importance until in these questioning days people began to discuss the right to inflict punishment at all. As to that, it may be admitted that the duty of preventing crime is co-ordinate with the right of punishing it.

No. 45.—VOL. I.

Latterly, however, a curious version of or inference from the vengeance theory has made its appearance, and been carried into effect by some few prominent authorities. These seem to assert that when an offender has been convicted and endured his punishment society and he are quits, and that his offence should be entirely ignored in awarding punishment for any further infraction of the law. So that we hear of incorrigible offenders who are known to live by crime being punished no more severely than one who has casually fallen into crime. To most people such a result would be considered a *reductio ad absurdum* of the theory, and would be held to prove sufficiently that any such ground for apportioning punishment must obviously be unsound. The great body of judicial authorities do, in fact, entirely repudiate the doctrine and this application of it, holding rather that the previous commission of offence is a reason for increasing the penalty—on the same principle as physicians increase the dose if the smaller quantity is found ineffective. This conflict of practice and the comparisons it gives rise to create no doubt a certain amount of scandal, and it is to be regretted that there is no way of bringing to reason those who perversely set the opinions of the general body of judicial authorities at defiance.

When in comparatively modern times the treatment of convicted prisoners came to be discussed, and it was admitted that the neglect and brutality which characterised the methods up to the last century could no longer be continued, two views of the principles which should govern the improved methods presented themselves, and each party argued on the assumption that theirs was the only view.

One side concentrated its attention on the offender individually, and treated the matter as if the whole object was to produce an effect upon him. The other side thought more of the great mass of possible offenders, and held that the first

OCT. 8, 1898.

[All Rights Reserved.]

object was so to treat the one who was caught and sentenced that not only he himself but any other person who contemplated a crime might be deterred from it by thinking of the miseries that he saw might possibly follow on its commission.

The first of these two views naturally enough soon led those who held it to go a stage deeper still, and to question whether the individual could not be better dealt with and prevented from again offending by another method altogether—namely, by reforming him. This idea fitted very well with the feeling of humanity which is one of the characteristics of the present period, and which does honour to it, though it sometimes goes astray.

Discussion on these and kindred matters had been hotly carried on for some years when, thirty-five years ago, I first became connected with prisons in England. Sir Joshua Jebb and others had been making great efforts to carry into practice and develop ideas which have lately been revived, and which are believed no doubt to be quite novel and advanced. A record and a sample of these experiments is to be found in Major Griffith's *Memorials of Millbank*. At this particular moment crime was thought to be increasing in an alarming degree, and the management of the convict prisons was commonly thought to have conduced to this by erring in the direction of mildness.

A very competent Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the whole subject, and issued a very weighty report, in which, among other things, the opinion was expressed that the punishment as actually carried out was 'not sufficiently dreaded.' About the same time a committee of the House of Lords took into consideration the treatment of prisoners under short sentences in county and borough prisons. Legislation followed on these two reports in 1864 and 1865, and on these reports, and in accordance with this legislation, was established the system on which prisoners are treated in prisons of the United Kingdom. The Prisons Act, 1877, did not repeal the Prisons Act, 1865, which regulated in detail the treatment of prisoners under sentence of imprisonment up to two years, except by mitigating its rigour in one or two matters. Its object and effect in the main, so far as concerns the present question, was still further to ensure that the treatment of all prisoners should be uniform.

It will be clear to anybody who studies these reports and the steps taken in consequence of them that the answer given by these high authorities, and sanctioned by legislation, to the question, 'What object should be aimed at in framing the system to which prisoners should be subjected while undergoing their sentences?' would have been that it should be in the first place deterrent, but that reformation should be considered and encouraged, subject to the deterrent effect not

being diminished. To illustrate this it is only necessary to study the Prisons Act, 1865. For example, by that act all adult male prisoners sentenced to hard labour are to be employed on labour of the treadwheel or of physically laborious type during their whole sentences; or, if these sentences exceed three months, for, at all events, that period. The wooden bed, without mattress, similar to that used by soldiers on guard, was authorised. The separate confinement of all prisoners was provided for; but though this has some penal effect, it was chiefly to prevent mutual contamination. It is lamentable to see considerable tendency to relax this, with the probable result that prisons will again become nurseries of crime.

But it would be an entire mistake to suppose that the principle of reformation was ignored or contemned by the public or by the legislation of those days. On the contrary, it was in the following year—1866—that the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Acts were passed; but it was seen, in fact, that the two processes, punishment and reformation, were distinct; that the latter required much longer time and must be carried on under a different set of conditions to the former, and that it was more applicable to offenders whose age was such that their character and habits might be altered and improved by good influences than to older persons in whom these were more fixed. They also knew that the law and resulting practice as regards sentences of imprisonment absolutely precluded the adoption of reformatory methods in prisons as the leading principle of treatment, because the necessary condition of time was absolutely wanting.

This is a point which has been entirely missed by those who would substitute reformation for deterrence as the leading principle in local prisons. They fail to perceive that an entire recasting of the criminal law and the actual practice as to the lengths of sentences would be necessary, and, further, an enormous increase in the size, number, and cost of the prison establishments.

Reformation of a criminal means an entire change in his thoughts and habits on certain points. Old ideas and old habits cannot be altered in a few days, and new ones formed so as to be permanent. They must be imbibed gradually, and are most effectively brought about by association, under appropriate conditions, with, and supervision by, persons whose principles are sound and who will exercise an influence for good.

The period necessary for this process will no doubt differ for different people; but it may safely be said that it would never be less than several months, and more often several years.

Now, consider the periods for which prisoners are actually sentenced, and whether they allow time for the process. Take as an example the year ending 31st March 1895, which is as good as any other; in round numbers 153,000 sen-

tences of imprisonment were passed. This number of sentences produced an average daily prison population which may be put at 12,000 sentenced prisoners. Clearly, therefore, the mass of these prisoners must have received very short sentences, and in fact 99,000 had fourteen days or less; 130,000 had sentences not exceeding five weeks, probably in reality not exceeding a calendar month; another 10,000 had sentences up to two calendar months; and another 6000 up to three months. Only 1629, an insignificant proportion, had sentences of a year or more. It must be obvious that if a sentence of imprisonment is to be carried out on the lines of a reformatory, as has been proposed, these short sentences must be increased very considerably. In order to make this possible the law must be altered, the judges and magistrates must be persuaded to give effect to it, and the prison establishments, instead of providing for 12,000 sentenced prisoners, must be multiplied so as to provide for the accumulation which will result from the longer sentences, and rise to a number which I shrink from estimating. If the average length of reformatory sentences was only ten times as long as the present average of short sentences—and they could not be less or even so little—then the accommodation must be increased tenfold!

The local prisons now cost roughly £400,000 per annum. What would be the cost of maintenance of this large number of reformatory prisons? And what the initial cost of providing them?

These considerations show the proposal to be impracticable, apart from any question whether it is desirable. But it must also be obvious that if deterrence plays a secondary part, the effect of the example on the potential criminal must be very much weakened, and one of the most important results of inflicting punishment thereby lost.

The above reasons show that, practically, deterrence must be the foundation of the system applied to the immense majority of prisoners committed to local prisons.

Deterrent punishment cannot, of course, be inflicted without subjecting the offender to discomforts of various kinds; but in discussion on the subject it is very common to meet with unwillingness to admit the necessity for each particular item in the punishment, or an appeal for pity for the 'poor creatures,' or for indulgences which it is supposed will give rise to a responsive gratitude or other development of the higher feelings; and if these notions prevail we shall return to the condition of things referred to in the beginning of this article, when the prisons failed because punishment was not sufficiently dreaded.

These discomforts are, after all, not excessively severe under the existing system, for public feeling has long prevented any excess in this direction. To a well-fed philanthropist it may seem very

hard to be limited to a diet which is *en close* to what is 'sufficient, but not more than sufficient,' to use the language of the medical committee which framed it; but there are unfortunately many honest folks who never have more. To sleep on boards without a mattress is a hardship such as soldiers, sailors, travellers, sportsmen, and others voluntarily put up with; and hard physical labour is disagreeable only to the indolent, and therefore most appropriate as a punishment to persons of the criminal type, who for the most part fall into crime from a desire to obtain the means of enjoyment without working for them.

There are no doubt some prisoners who after undergoing a sentence of imprisonment are not deterred from, sooner or later, committing crime again. The same may be said of persons who have gone through the reformatory treatment, for many of our worst criminals are failures from the reformatories. Many reckon on escaping detection; others in time forget the lesson. Still, the results in the main of the deterrent system are good. Not only has crime decreased immensely during the past twenty years under our existing system of punishment and reformation, but the returns published by the late Prison Committee showed that seventy out of every hundred who have once been subjected to the deterrent system are never heard of as criminals again, and about half of the remainder are cured after a second course of the same treatment, making 85 per cent. This is not very far from 93 per cent. claimed as the result of much longer treatment and under much more favourable circumstances for Red Hill Reformatory, for young persons, cited as the most favourable sample of these institutions, and is quite as good or better than can be claimed for the average of reformatories. Incurrigibles might very properly be kept in confinement under suitable conditions for long periods, to protect society against them.

Reformatory methods might, however, with advantage be applied to some persons now sentenced to short periods of imprisonment who are just too old for existing reformatories. But these must be committed for a sufficiently long period to reformatories to be created for the purpose.

The foregoing remarks may be summed up as follows: Reformation and deterrence are both objects to be aimed at in treating criminals. Reformation takes a long time, deterrence may be effected in a short time. Reformation affects only the individual, deterrence operates to prevent others from yielding to temptation. The criminal law and judicial practice permitting in most cases of only short sentences, time is not given for reformatory treatment to have effect, so that deterrent treatment is the only alternative. By law and the recommendations of important committees and commissions, deterrence has hitherto been adopted as the leading principle in prisons

of the United Kingdom, and has been most successful in its object of repressing crime. If reformatory treatment is to be made the leading principle, the law and practice must be altered to admit of longer sentences, and the number and size of our prison establishments must be very largely increased, and their cost likewise. This may be justifiable for some portion of the persons now sentenced to short terms, either to give them opportunity to reform or to protect society from them if incorrigible.

As we have said, the returns published by the late Prison Committee show that 70 per cent. of persons sentenced never return, and that 85 per cent. of persons who undergo one or two short sentences do not return—surely a very fair result when compared with the returns of Red Hill and other reformatories taking young people for long periods.

A very fantastic view of the origin of crime came into prominence recently, and was apparently much supported by some members of the late Departmental Committee on Prisons, who seemed to hold that crime was an evidence of mental disease, and should be treated accordingly. They were, of course, able to obtain expressions of opinion from certain medical witnesses in favour of the idea, which is apparently founded on the

theory that crime is so unnatural and illogical that nobody in possession of their reason would commit it.

It would be much more nearly true to say that to commit what we call crime is the natural tendency of mankind, and that to refrain from it is artificial. Nature tells human creatures, no less than it does animals, to gratify their senses—for instance, to take possession of anything they see and like without reference to rights of property; and as for logic, there is no doubt that the gains by crime are enormous. The ten commandments, with their injunctions not to steal, and so on, did not come by nature, but are clearly in restraint of nature.

Yet the former view of crime, absurd as it may appear, has received some sort of countenance from the Parliamentary Committee on the Prisons Bill, which has passed an amendment requiring that one of the commissioners shall be an expert in mental diseases—a requirement which tends rather to show that those who proposed and passed the amendment entirely misapprehend not only the nature of crime but the functions of the commissioners, for the work it is supposed such an officer would do is much better performed under the existing organisation by a medical inspector.

THE SHIP-BREAKERS.

A FENLAND ROMANCE.

CHAPTER X.—PAID IN FULL.

MEANWHILE Ruth had joined the crowd outside the 'Jolly Bacchus' inn. She was eager to know what was going on; for she had no thought now except the one thought of finding John Jarvis. A search-party had already been organised by Tudway. It was impossible for him in his convalescent state to take an active part in the expedition; but, since the wreck of the *Seagull* had made him famous all along the coast, his words were listened to and obeyed. Highways and byways between Cablethorpe and the 'Cross' inn, including all the intermediate dike-land, were to be explored without any further talk or loss of time.

The search-party started off in a body; but as soon as the first diverging road was reached the separation began. Ruth attached herself to the main division, which had received instructions to keep along the road that led direct to the 'Cross' inn. A chilling, drizzly rain had begun to fall; it had been thawing fast for the last four-and-twenty hours, and there was hardly any ice left in the dikes. The possibility, therefore, of Jarvis having met with death by drowning—for the banks were

slippery and the roads dark—was seriously discussed to account for his disappearance.

When Ruth presently saw lanterns moving in every direction over the fens, like eager prying eyes, a sense of hopefulness returned. Besides, the friendly voices—for she recognised more than one voice as belonging to a workman from the timber-yard—cheered her in the midst of all this terrible uncertainty. All that could be done was being done to-night to discover some trace of the missing man. More than once a shout came from over the fens—a shout that brought every one to a standstill. But nothing followed; and Ruth's spirits sank to zero again when she caught sight of the light in the bar-parlour window of the 'Cross' inn—for it was there that the search-party had arranged for their reunion. She stood with an eager outlook at the cross-roads for those who had not yet come in. While one man of the party yet remained to report himself there was some hope. She stood there, a solitary figure in the night, with the rain beating in her face and the chilly wind blowing gustily around her. The rest had entered this old roadside tavern, arriving in twos and threes from various points. When hope

had almost left her and she was on the point of turning away in despair, Ruth's attention was drawn towards a number of lanterns—seven at least—coming slowly along one of the high-roads. The funereal pace at which the lights were moving set her heart beating madly. She imagined a burden being borne along by a number of men, and she started to run down the road. Suddenly she stopped. Among those of the expedition who had just entered the 'Cross' inn was the local doctor. She hurried back, and found him in a group that stood near the inn door.

'Come,' said Ruth, laying her hand tremulously on his arm; 'I think you're wanted. Look! there is some one hurrying'—

As she spoke one of the lanterns became detached from the rest, and began to move rapidly towards them.

'What's to do?' shouted the doctor.

'We've found him,' was shouted back. 'He was a-lying at Grimoldsby's corner, on the Wash-dyke Road'—

'Dead?'

'Ay,' replied the man, swinging his lantern in the direction of the advancing lights—'aboot dead; ay.'

Ruth was prepared for some such news; but the man's answer caused her to stagger with a sudden feeling of faintness, and she would have fallen had she not clung desperately to the doctor's arm. For a moment every one of those moving lanterns grew dim as in a mist and went out. But she made a brave effort to overcome the cause of stupefaction that was threatening. Perhaps the keen wind and chilly rain did something to revive her, for she speedily recovered, and urged the doctor to hasten forward. 'Go to him,' she cried; 'save him! It may not be too late.'

That night John Jarvis lay at the 'Cross' inn, lingering doubtfully between life and death. The doctor remained until nearly daybreak, and then he left Ruth in charge; for he had other patients in the fenlands who needed him, for miles round. Ruth took her place at John's bedside. Her love for him, if for no other reason, urged her to do all that was in her power to turn the tide of ebbing life. She believed that her brother Gabriel had done this wrong, and the belief made her still more eager to make every effort to save John's life. She thought of the garret in Nelson Square, from which she had come to avert this peril. Would John die after all, and make the misery of her life complete? She looked down into his pale face in the dawning light, and at this moment he slowly opened his eyes. And presently—when she bent nearer, and raised him gently and smoothed his pillow—it was with a sense of unspeakable joy that she heard him whisper, 'Ruth!' It seemed to her as though it were the first time that he had ever uttered her name.

Descending the stairs after leaving John's room at the 'Cross' inn, the doctor encountered Lawyer Burtenshaw.

'Well, what do you make of the case?'

'He's not likely to recover consciousness to-night.'

'To-morrow?' suggested the lawyer.

'Can't say.'

'No? Well, we shall not clear up this mystery till he does.'

'Probably not,' replied the doctor laconically.

When Lawyer Burtenshaw drove off in his gig for Alford the rain that beat down upon him was heavier and the wind more chilly; and the night had become so dark that he could not see an inch beyond the reflection of the gig-lamp lights flung upon the road, which his swift-footed mare seemed to be doing her best to outstrip. The lawyer, although enveloped in a thick overcoat and well packed in with wraps, shivered continually as if he had taken a malarious inspiration out of the misty fens.

The old family mansion—where generations of Burtenshaws had diligently plied the law—was in the market-place of Alford. This man was a bachelor, the last of his race. He threw the reins to his man—who came from the stables adjoining as the gig drew up at the door—and let himself into the house. The servants had retired, but they had left a good fire in the drawing-room. Mr Burtenshaw, still shivering, sat down with his elbows on his knees and his head between his hands, lost in thought. For an hour or more he sat in this brooding attitude. Then he rose, put on a greatcoat and a low-crowned hat, and, lighting a candle on the landing, crept downstairs. He reached the door of his private office on the ground-floor and went in. The room had the appearance of a library. It was luxuriously furnished. There was a massive oaken bookcase filled with law-books. A number of portraits of legal Burtenshaws, one of them in wig and gown, decorated the panelled walls. Almost in the centre of the room was a large desk; and the carpet spread out beneath, patterned with converging lines like a spider's web. Had Lawyer Burtenshaw been a thief intent on crime, he could scarcely have behaved with more appearance of craftiness or stealth. He lighted a dark-lantern, although there were already some indications of daybreak, and made his way through a back-door into the stables. Opening the coach-house door, where the gig was kept, he unlocked the box under the seat, and drew forth a hand-bag. The light from the lantern flashed for an instant upon the letters 'J. J.' Then the lawyer took the bag under his arm and returned to his office. A great iron safe stood in a corner of the room. In the centre cavity of this safe he deposited the bag, turned the lock upon it, and went out at the front door.

The rain had ceased. There was a streak of rosy daylight along the eastern sky. He chose the

road by which he had come from the 'Cross' inn on the previous night. Was he bent upon being among the first to make inquiries that morning as to John's condition? It would seem so; for he frequently turned into a bypath across the fields, when a shorter way was offered, in order to reach his destination. The old grim smile had come into his face. He had resolved to crush Gabriel Beek—crush him utterly at last. A warrant for his apprehension would be out to-day; and before nightfall, as Lawyer Burtenshaw believed, the fellow would be safely under arrest.

This walk and the keenness of the wintry air gave the lawyer an appetite; and he presently turned into the parlour of a roadside inn to partake of bread and cheese, with a tankard of ale. He had scarcely seated himself before this simple repast when some men came into the tavern; and the door of the room which Mr Burtenshaw occupied having been left ajar, he could distinctly overhear their talk. He soon discovered that the subject under discussion was one that concerned himself.

'They've found him, have they?'

'Ay,' was the reply that reached the lawyer's ear; 'and what's more, mate, he's like to recover. They do say Beek's manager has already named the man what struck the blow, and'—

'Why, 'twas Gabriel Beek, weren't it?'

'No, no. 'Twas that lawyer chap, Burtenshaw, he do say, and'—

Lawyer Burtenshaw waited to hear no more. He hurried out by a side-door, and turned his steps in another direction. The thought of going to the 'Cross' inn had been abandoned. The grim smile had left his face. He peered about him with a look of dread. He was no longer the hunter; the thought of crushing Gabriel Beek was becoming illusive and shadowy. It was he who was hunted now.

He turned into an unfrequented byway that led indirectly towards the sea, but with no fixed purpose. He groped forward like one suddenly struck blind. He had exercised his brain for years past to discover a means of getting Beek and Son's business into his own hands. He had been doubly prompted, therefore, to make an attempt upon John's life; for by means of circumstantial evidence he had perceived the chance of directing suspicion against Gabriel Beek. It had been a desperate game, and in the impulse of the moment it had appeared worth the playing. But his calculations had proved unsound. He had lost. Jarvis had unexpectedly regained consciousness; and had already pointed to him as the man who had dealt the blow.

He sank against a gate by the roadside, with his head between his hands. He would never get the Beek estate into his clutches now. That which he had coveted so long, which he had plotted so cunningly to possess, had slipped through his fingers at the last moment. He staggered

under the weight of this stern and bitter disappointment. He would be forced to surrender. Could he appeal to Jarvis for mercy? Who could prove that it was he who had done this deed? But he was now ready to accept any compromise. He would deliver up to John the hand-bag which lay hidden away in his iron safe, and invent a plausible reason for having the thing in his possession. Could he not plead that he had retained it through a dread lest it should fall into the hands of Gabriel Beek?

The situation must be boldly faced. Lawyer Burtenshaw was shrewd enough to know that nothing could be gained by flight, and he now turned resolutely to retrace his steps towards the 'Cross' inn. He was determined to confront Jarvis; for most troubles, as he well knew, lose half their terror when once confronted. But as he looked across the fenlands what should he see, to his utter consternation, but the burly figure of Gabriel Beek slouching towards the spot where he crouched! No one could mistake the look on the fellow's stubborn face. The long outstanding debt must now be paid in full. There was no escape.

The lawyer peered about him wildly. Gabriel Beek carried a heavy oaken stick in his hand. He raised it threateningly, and shouted out an imprecation which sent the colour from Burtenshaw's cheeks.

Some distance ahead there was a large pool or tidal basin. There was a boat at the edge of this pool. If Lawyer Burtenshaw could reach this boat, and row across to the opposite bank before the fellow could intercept him, it might be possible to cut off all pursuit; for the waters of a broad dike fell into the basin on the land side, and emptied into the sea with every ebb of the tide. The lawyer ran towards this spot, and threw himself into the boat. He believed himself out of danger, and breathed again. But the real danger to him, as he soon found out, had only now begun.

To his intense horror, when the boat had glided into the centre of the pool, Gabriel Beek appeared above the flood-gates which shut in the great volume of water, and grasped the huge windlass with both hands.

It was a fearful moment. The tide was ebbing fast. One turn of that windlass and the flood-gates would burst open, and the water in the broad basin would be precipitated with a mighty rush through a vaulted dike direct into the sea. Lawyer Burtenshaw dipped his sculls. He made a desperate struggle to gain the opposite bank. But the current suddenly seized upon the boat. It was irresistible. The panic-stricken lawyer looked round; his fingers lost their grip, and the sculls dropped from his hands. A man with the face of a demon was working vigorously at the windlass overhead; the gates were thrown back with a cannon's boom; and in an instant

the boat containing Lawyer Burtenshaw was swept through the gap, and was gone.

CHAPTER XI.—CONCLUSION.

SPRINGTIME had come. The ice had melted in the dikes; the meadows were developing a richer and deeper green; the wintry gray had gone out of the sky, and a glorious expanse of sunlight was spreading daily over fenland and sea. Skylarks rose above the dunes, and the monotonous murmur of the waves below made their song seem the more bright and sprightly.

Captain Tudway's old ship still lay upon the sands at Cablethorpe, washed by every tide. Hettie Beek, seated at the cabin window one day, looked out upon the sea.

'Ted,' said she, 'it's time we were breaking up this hulk. We shall have to wait till the back end of the year, as we country-folk call the autumn, if we don't have a sale of ship-wood soon.'

Tudway took a seat at her side. 'I'll never sell this cabin,' said he. 'I'm going to fix it up in the garden, Hettie, when we're married.'

He lit his pipe and leant back thoughtfully.

'We'll call it Captain Tudway's cabin always,' said Hettie.

Tudway nodded. 'Hettie,' said he, blowing a cloud, 'what a lot of things have happened since we last sat talking here together!'

'So I've been thinking,' said Hettie. 'It's quite a romance.'

'Yes. Six months ago your father was, to all appearance, hale and hearty. But that old pirate, Burtenshaw, ran him down—as Uncle Tudway would say—and sank him. There's no doubt about that now.'

'Ah, well! Lawyer Burtenshaw's own end,' said Hettie, with a grieved look, 'was more terrible than father's. There's no doubt now that he was drowned. The mystery as to who made the attempt on John's life will never be quite cleared up.'

'It was like good old John, for every one's sake, to say as little as might be about the affair,' said Tudway.

'John thinks of every one,' said Hettie, 'except himself.'

'One can hardly be expected, when knocked down upon a dark fenland road,' pursued Tudway, 'to throw much light upon a situation. John suspected the lawyer. He spoke of him to Ruth as the culprit; and besides, John's bag containing Uncle Tudway's money was found in Burtenshaw's safe. That looked suspicious enough. But now that John has got over the shock, and can calmly recall to mind all that happened upon that particular night, he fancies that he left his bag under the seat in Burtenshaw's gig. So one must draw one's own conclusion.'

'Well,' said Hettie, 'there's one good thing come of it. Ruth's devotion has saved John's life; and John has found out during his tedious illness that she loves him.'

'Ah! And, what's better still,' said Tudway, 'John has found out that he cares for Ruth. So, in all likelihood, Hettie, there'll be a double wedding in the family this spring.'

Looking from the cabin window, Hettie saw vivid colours thrown upon the sea. A glorious sunset had spread over the sky above the line of fenland hills, and the waves were tumbling into the golden light.

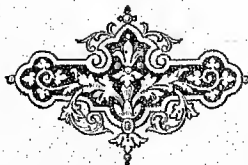
Tudway, after smoking his pipe in silence for a while, said:

'Gabriel has been tracked at last. At the office of the Riverside Timber Syndicate—which had more to do with billiards than timber—a letter was found. This letter led to the discovery of his whereabouts; and the discovery has confirmed our worst fears.'

As the colours of the sunset deepened in the sky, the uplifted waves assumed a brighter hue, subsiding at last into white foam in the lengthening shadows of the dunes.

'While travelling here and there through Texas—though where he found the money to travel at all is not known—he met with his death. It was a tragic one enough, Hettie; but that will hardly surprise you. He got into a quarrel in some dive, as the bar-saloons are called, and before he could defend himself he was shot down.'

Still the colours deepened, and the uplifted waves assumed a still brighter hue. Seagulls went by in single file; and as they moved swiftly towards the distant dip of ocean, they seemed to grow into the scaly form of a serpent gliding stealthily over the waves, until seen no more.



GOLD ASSAYING AS A PROFESSION.

By P. G. HOLMS.



THE man in the street has bracketed together the two words 'gold' and 'assay.' The mining paragraphs in the financial columns of his newspaper frequently put on record that such a mine on such a date produced ore assaying so many ounces or pennyweights to the ten. The scrimp knowledge of the man tells him that it is better and more prosperous for a mine to yield ounces of gold than pennyweights, for is not one ounce equal to twenty pennyweights? Beyond this limit he is ignorant. He wots not of dry and wet assays; he cares not that the assayer may determine minute quantities of platinum, silver, copper, lead, iron, tin, amid many other substances. It is of no interest to this man that there are gravimetric, titrometric, volumetric, gasometric, or colorimetric assays. The result of a gold assay means the rise or the fall of a share to him. It is, therefore, the purpose of this short paper to give some little prominence to the much-neglected art of gold assaying, as it is a profession almost unheard of in this country, save by the above-mentioned man in the street.

Imagine a gold-mine. You may select many climates—Siberia or Africa, Klondike or Australia, California or India. Situate your mine where you will; so long as it be a gold-mine the procedure of assaying is the same all the wide world over. Select a mass of ore weighing, perhaps, fifty pounds and smash it up. Do not expect to see any gold in it, because the precious metal is probably so thinly and uniformly scattered through the quartz that it is impossible to spot a grain together. Continue grinding the ore till it is in the form of powder. This powder is heaped into a cone, which is divided into four parts, of which the sampler takes two whose angles are opposite to one another. Mix these two parts thoroughly and again divide into four; take two portions again, and so on till a sample of convenient bulk is obtained. By this logical method the sample yielded is, on any ordinary calculation of probability, certain to represent accurately the original mass taken.

A certain quantity of this sample is now weighed out, two equal amounts being taken as checks upon each other. The weighing may be done in denominational values of either grammes or assay tons. The assay ton is a most convenient invention, and is very simply explained. The ordinary ton contains 32,666·6 ounces; if, then, we make a unit (an assay ton) weighing 32·6667 grammes, each 001 of a gramme will equal one ounce per ton. Thus, no calculation is needed at all to estimate the gold richness of an ore *per ton*.

Say we weigh out then two separate portions

of the ore of one assay ton (A.T.) each. With each mix thoroughly bicarbonate of soda, litharge, borax, glass, and flour in varying proportions; when thoroughly uniform in colour, empty the mixtures into fireclay crucibles, and strew on the top a thin layer of salt. Put on the lids of the two crucibles and surround them with living coal, coke, or burning vaporised benzoline in a crucible furnace. The crucibles are heated till the masses of ore and fluxes are in a state of tranquil fusion—that is, not bubbling or boiling. The white-hot fluid is then poured into iron moulds and allowed to cool. On examination, after cooling, the fused masses will be found to consist of: (1) A layer of white substance, which is salt. (2) A slag. This is usually dark in colour, often resembling malachite, and is formed by the fusion of the borax and soda with the worthless or earthy matter (gangue) in the ore. (3) A lead button, produced from the litharge, or lead oxide, originally mixed in the charge. This lead button contains all the silver and gold in the ore. The heat of the furnace drives off from the lead oxide its oxygen, so that pure lead is left; this, in virtue of its weight, percolates downwards through the slag during the heating in the furnace, collecting all the gold and silver present, and eventually forms a button weighing, if a proper amount of flour has been added originally, about sixteen to twenty grammes. The flour has the effect of varying the size of lead button produced, and is said to possess a *reducing* action.

The next step in the process is to get rid of the lead without also losing the gold and silver. This is done by an operation known as *cupellation*. The cupel is a small, round, bone-ash cup, which is placed in a sort of fireclay tunnel with one end closed up, known as a muffle. The muffle is heated from the outside, either by burying it with coals or by playing burning gas on every part of it. When the cupel has attained the heat of the interior of the muffle, the lead button is placed in it and the door of the muffle shut, so as to procure the greatest amount of heat possible. When the lead is seen to be melted and fuming, the muffle door is opened to admit the air, which is sucked in by the intense heat.

The oxygen contained in the air oxidises the lead into lead oxide, and the bone-ash cupel absorbs lead oxide like a sponge, but refuses to absorb the gold and silver; so that at length there is left in the cupel only a button of the two precious metals. It is to be supposed that two ore samples have been treated similarly both in the crucibles and cupels; but for the sake of convenience it is better to explain the treatment of one only. The bead of gold and silver obtained

weighs, let us say, '0016 of a gramme. This is noted down. The bead after weighing is flattened out in a flattening-mill, so as to expose as large a surface as possible to the nitric acid which is then added to it. On heating, the silver is dissolved, but of course the gold is untouched by the action of any single acid. The remaining pure gold is treated with stronger acid, called 'parting acid,' to drive off any suspected trace of silver, and then washed with water. If the 'parting' of the gold from the silver has been successful, the gold is left as a thin, small sheet; from this all moisture is driven off by heat. On weighing, the gold may be as heavy as '0007 of a gramme. Then, as it has previously been noted that the total gold and silver bead weighed '0016 of a gramme, the weight of silver present must have been '0009 of a gramme. That is to say, in one assay ton of 32'6667 grammes there are '0007 gramme of gold and '0009 gramme of silver. It has been stated at the commencement of this article that in an assay ton each '001 of a gramme represents in a real ton one ounce. Therefore we have $\frac{7}{8}$ ths of an ounce of gold—that is, 14 pennyweights (20 dwt. = 1 oz.)—and $\frac{9}{8}$ ths of an ounce of silver—that is, 18 pennyweights, to the ton. *Quod erat faciendum.*

Many minor processes, such as roasting, scorification, and inquartation, enter into the work done in an assay; but it has been desirable to make the process as clear and free from complication as possible, and for this reason a simple ore has been selected. Of course the results obtained from two assay tons assayed simultaneously ought to be coincident with one another, and this is why two assay tons have been supposed to be treated together in the above explanation.

As regards the chances open to a man taking

up the profession of a gold assayer. He ought, in the first place, to have a good knowledge of inorganic chemistry, especially as regards mineral analysis; of geology and mineralogy, both theoretically and practically; and a smattering of electricity and engineering. With his mind thus stored, a young fellow may get from £15 to £30 a month in any prosperous gold-mining district as the servant of a company; or he may establish an assay office of his own, charging a two-guinea fee for each assay.

Again, a sharp, adaptable man will keep his eyes open and study the many various processes for gold extraction. He may classify the ores under the processes to which each seems to yield the largest percentage of gold. He may learn how to design plants of machinery. In fact, he has it in his power to become a metallurgist with perhaps £150 per month salary. From such an income it is easy to save, if the Scylla and Charybdis of drink and gambling are steered clear of; for these two vices are made prominent by the want of proper society in mining settlements.

With a moderate capital it is easy to finance, when the amateur financier has his hand on the pulse of the share market, and knows to a penny-weight the amount of gold which a mine or group of mines will produce.

It is well to remember that in this peculiar branch of service the Americans have paramount influence; but it is also well to remember that the new Klondike fields are in British territory, and that although, while the alluvial diggings last, the miner needs no assayer or metallurgist to aid him, yet when the great quartz deposits come to be tapped, there will be a great demand for gold assayers created.

THE CANDIDATE'S WEDDING.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.



ANY candidate who had so recently tasted the sweets of popularity, whose supporters at the mass meeting the previous night had cheered themselves hoarse, and had sung 'He's a jolly good fellow' till breath failed them, might well have shrunk back appalled at the change that had taken place in a few short hours. Could these scowling faces be really the same that, flushed with enthusiasm, had confronted Douglas as he stood on the platform waiting at the close of almost every sentence until the vociferous cheers of his excited audience had subsided?

It did indeed seem as though Barker's gloomy prophecies would be fulfilled to the letter. The news that Douglas insisted on marrying the

defaulting chairman's daughter had spread with lightning-like rapidity throughout the district, and had produced the most unfavourable impression upon the exasperated shareholders of the Southpool Building Society. The idea that he was actuated solely by chivalrous motives was openly scoffed at. They argued that no man in his senses would act in that way who had not some very substantial reason for doing so. They began to suspect that he must himself have had some guilty knowledge of the frauds, and had possibly even secured a share of the proceeds. If that were the case he might well have cause to fear that Meredith would expose him if he broke off the marriage. And even if he were innocent on this occasion his character could hardly be above suspicion, when he was evidently

incapable of feeling that righteous indignation against his future father-in-law's conduct which the circumstances more than warranted.

Many who were not shareholders agreed with them; while others, though believing Douglas to be absolutely blameless, regarded his conduct as imprudent and unseemly. The result was that numbers declared their intention of voting against him, and some, who were not prepared to go that length, announced that they would abstain from voting altogether. It was little wonder that the enthusiasm of those who had determined to stand loyally by him had faded away, and that they remained silent and unresponsive, gazing at him with reproachful glances as the carriage rolled by.

Even Douglas winced when the opposition candidate, happening to drive past at the same time, received a round of hearty cheers. Yet he turned a smiling face on Elsie, who was still tearfully beseeching him to allow her to return home, asserting again and again that unless the wedding was postponed she was quite certain that he would not be elected.

'Keep cool, little woman; keep cool,' he said placidly. 'Why should you leap to the conclusion that I shan't be elected?'

'Didn't you see the faces of those men—the men with your colours in their coats?'

Douglas took her hand in his and patted it reassuringly.

'When we come out of church,' he said, 'I shall have a talk with those men. Don't you worry yourself, little girl. It'll be all right, you'll see.'

'No, no,' she exclaimed almost hysterically, 'it won't be all right—it can't be; and you know it. I must have been blind, but I see it all now. In the eyes of these people I am nothing more nor less than the daughter of a swindler, and in order to be loyal to me you are sacrificing perhaps the only chance you will ever have of getting into parliament. I won't accept the sacrifice, Douglas—I can't; I daren't. Tell the coachman to drive back, or I'll stop the carriage and get out at once.'

She had risen impulsively to her feet; but Douglas drew her gently back again.

'Sit down, my dear girl, and listen to reason,' he said soothingly. 'You mustn't put me on a pedestal in that way, because I don't deserve it. My conduct is not in the least heroic, I can assure you. The situation is simply this: I should be a coward and a sneak if I were to break off our marriage because of what has happened, and those good, honest thickheads you saw would be the first to say so when they had time to come to their senses. My impression is they'll come to their senses before the polling-booths close; but in any case, my dear, remember that by marrying me to-day you save me from being regarded as a despicable cad, and you prove

that your father's innocence is, to you at least, absolutely above suspicion.'

She lay back with a weary little sigh of resignation.

'Oh dear!' she said, 'I wonder how it is that you always contrive to get your own way, Douglas.'

'Simply, my dear,' replied the modest youth, 'because I never try to get my own way unless I feel quite sure that I am right.'

Her eyes twinkled in spite of herself.

'I hope that—that in the future,' she said, with a little laugh, 'I shall sometimes be able to get my way when I feel quite sure that I am right.'

'I should rather think so,' rejoined Douglas merrily. 'Why, you dear little goose, if I were sure you were right I should never dream of opposing you.'

'Yes; but you mustn't decide whether I am right or not. It must be quite enough if I feel sure that I am right.'

Douglas laughed jovially.

'Well, well, we'll settle all that later on. In the meantime don't forget, my dear, that I wouldn't lose my little wife for all the gold-mines in South Africa, let alone a seat in the House of Commons. Ah! here we are at last.'

The carriage stopped abruptly at the door of the church. The street was seething with an excited crowd. As Douglas helped Elsie out of the carriage and gave her his arm, he was greeted with a tempest of hoots and groans. Fierce, angry faces were thrust close to his, and in spite of the efforts of the police he was rudely hustled as he drew Elsie into the porch. Twenty-four hours previously he had been the most popular man in Southpool.

The unfortunate Barker, whose appearance suggested that he was attending a funeral rather than a wedding, sat gloomily in a pew near the door. Except for him, Ethel West, the vicar, and Mr Joseph Sutton, the chairman of Douglas's election committee, the church was empty. Fearing a disturbance, the vicar had instructed the police to refuse the public admittance.

'Ah, you're there, Barker,' exclaimed Douglas.

'Up to time, as usual. Got the ring?'

'Yes,' replied Barker in funereal accents, 'it's quite safe, Mr Grant.'

'Good man,' said Douglas, patting him affectionately on the back. 'I knew I could depend on you.'

At that moment the vicar, who looked pale and anxious, drew Douglas on one side.

'My dear sir,' he said nervously, 'I'm old enough to be your father. You won't mind me speaking frankly—will you?'

'Not in the least,' rejoined Douglas cheerfully. 'I shall be delighted to hear anything you wish to say, and shall be very grateful for any advice you care to offer me.'

'Thanks,' said the vicar in his blandest and

most persuasive accents. 'I felt sure that you would not resent a little friendly advice from one so much older than yourself. Well, believe me, I most fully appreciate and admire the—the chivalrous motives which have induced you to refuse to postpone your wedding; but don't you think that, under the circumstances, your conduct is—you'll pardon me speaking so bluntly—is, to say the least of it, imprudent?'

'Perhaps so,' rejoined Douglas; 'but may I, with the utmost respect, venture to ask whether we should shrink from doing what we believe to be right because, from a practical point of view, our conduct may appear imprudent? Are we to obey the promptings of conscience only when we can do so without running any risk? Are we?—'

'Yes, yes; just so, just so,' interposed the vicar hurriedly; 'but still, you know, we must rule our conduct by the dictates of common-sense, and I merely suggest that, in deference to the wishes of your friends and supporters, you should consent to postpone the ceremony for a few days until Mr Meredith has had an opportunity of disproving the charges brought against him. Come, I knew your father very well. We were chums together at college, and I take a genuine interest in your welfare. Take my advice, and don't throw away what is possibly the best chance you'll ever have of winning a seat.'

'My dear sir,' replied Douglas warmly, 'I assure you I'm most grateful to you for the kind interest you take in me, and thoroughly appreciate your excellent advice. At the same time I feel confident that a moment's reflection will show you that, now I've gone so far, it is quite impossible for me to draw back. Even those who most strongly disapprove of my conduct would despise me for doing so. If I had at once announced that the wedding would be postponed, I should, as you suggest, no doubt have acted more prudently. But now that I have actually brought Miss Meredith to the church, and you are here to perform the ceremony, shouldn't I cut a very contemptible figure, shouldn't I appear an atrociously flabby, weak-kneed, indecisive sort of fellow if I drew back now? Besides, think of Miss Meredith's feelings. I couldn't—I really couldn't inflict such a slight on her. Wouldn't you, in your heart, think infinitely less of me if I did?'

'Oh, well, if you put it that way,' replied the vicar testily, 'I suppose I must say no more; but I fear you are taking a step that you will have serious cause to regret.'

'In any case,' said Douglas cordially, 'I shall always remember with sincere gratitude that you gave me the best advice in your power.'

With an impatient shrug of the shoulders the vicar walked off to the vestry.

At that moment Douglas's eye caught a glimpse of the glum face of Mr Joseph Sutton, the chair-

man of his committee, a tall, stout, prosperous man of business.

'Excuse me a moment, dear,' he whispered to Elsie; 'I want to speak to Mr Sutton.'

He advanced smilingly towards Sutton, who appeared in anything but a friendly mood.

'Good-morning, my dear sir,' said Douglas, shaking him warmly by the hand.

Sutton almost glared at him through his gold spectacles.

'Look here, Grant,' he said bluntly, 'you must excuse me saying that you've made a most awful mess of this business. I wouldn't give a brass farthing for your chance of being elected. Why couldn't you have postponed your marriage for a few days? It's pretty rough on us when we've been working like slaves to put you at the top of the poll.'

'It is,' assented Douglas, 'confoundedly rough on you, and I don't wonder that you feel it so. But that must be my excuse, Mr Sutton.'

He pointed to Elsie, who stood alone in the centre of the aisle, her slim little figure and wistful face illumined by a ray of sunshine from the window opposite.

'You've a daughter of your own,' continued Douglas—'one of the nicest and prettiest girls I ever met. Suppose, just for the sake of argument, that you had got into trouble like Meredith, would you think the less of any young fellow who stood by her loyally, who resolutely refused to admit that anything her father or any one else might have done could make her for one moment less precious in his eyes, less worthy of any mark of respect it was within his power to show her?'

Sutton tried to preserve his severe expression, but his eyes softened perceptibly.

'I know you wouldn't, my dear sir,' continued Douglas. 'You'd think all the more of him. Besides, you see I couldn't possibly back out now; and as the thing can't be helped, I want you'—he linked his arm in Sutton's and drew him towards Elsie—'I want you, as her father can't be present, to give her away.'

'But, look here,' expostulated Sutton; 'I really can't. It isn't fair to ask me. It places me in a false position. I disapprove of the whole thing; I really do. I've been saying so all morning.'

'Yes, yes,' said Douglas soothingly as he hurried him along; 'but you see you can't let your old friend's daughter be given away by a pew-opener. Elsie, as your father can't be here, Mr Sutton has kindly undertaken to give you away.'

'It's very kind of you, Mr Sutton,' said Elsie.

Sutton was about to expostulate, but when he held Elsie's small hand in his, and looked into the sad little face that should have been lit up with smiles and blushes, the words died away on his lips.

'It's a privilege, my dear,' he said kindly, draw-

ing her arm through his. But he couldn't make up his mind to let Douglas escape quite so easily.

'My dear young lady,' he said as they walked up the aisle, 'I'm an old married man, and if you'll take my advice, you'll begin by not letting this young man have too much of his own way. If you don't put your foot down at once you won't have a will of your own in three months from now.'

'I'm sure,' said Elsie softly, 'that Douglas will never insist on having his own way unless he feels quite sure he's in the right.'

'Oh,' remarked Mr Sutton, with a grim smile, and the conversation ceased.

The vicar got through the service as quickly as possible. He was naturally anxious to be rid of the turbulent crowd outside that was growing noisier than ever, fearing serious damage to the church if they forced their way past the police.

As the newly-made man and wife went into the vestry to sign their names the noise became so uproarious that the pen trembled in Elsie's hand; Ethel West, one of the pluckiest girls that ever breathed, turned pale; and even Mr Sutton, the most solid and resolute of men, began to look ill at ease. Barker still preserved his funereal aspect, and was apparently too miserable to care what became of him.

'Upon my word,' said Mr Sutton, 'I think we'd better go out at the side door, and get a cab at the railway station.'

'I should strongly advise you to do so,' declared the vicar earnestly.

'Not we,' rejoined Douglas, proudly drawing his wife's arm through his. 'We'll go out at the front door and meet them face to face.'

'Well, well, well,' said Mr Sutton, 'I'll say no more. I know it's a waste of breath, for you're sure to get your own way in the end.'

As they walked down the aisle the uproar grew louder and louder.

'Why, they're cheering,' said Douglas. 'What can they be cheering for?'

'Probably the opposition candidate,' rejoined Sutton, with a grimace.

'We'll soon put all that right,' said Douglas cheerfully as they passed into the porch. 'Will you allow us to pass, officer, please?'

As the policeman drew aside even Douglas stood dumfounded at the astonishing transformation which had taken place. The steps and the asphalt walk leading to the churchyard gate were covered with crimson baize, and a number of pretty little girls stood with baskets of flowers ready to strew them in the path of the bride. Gorgeous banners with 'Vote for Grant,' 'Grant for ever,' and so on, fluttered above the heads of the crowd, and the opposite windows were gay with Union-jacks and brilliantly-coloured streamers. As the bride and bridegroom appeared at the church door a mighty cheer rose from a thousand throats, and hats and sticks were waved frantically in the air.

'Why, bless my soul and body!' gasped Mr Sutton, 'what does all this mean?'

A tall, handsome, middle-aged man, who had apparently been addressing the crowd, advanced to meet them. Elsie rushed towards him, and clasped her arms round his neck; while the people cheered themselves hoarse, and Douglas was pelted with flowers and rice.

The secret was out. It was Mr Meredith. The secretary of the Building Society had accused him of complicity in the frauds he had himself perpetrated, in order to satisfy an old-established grudge; but had subsequently made a full confession admitting that he alone was guilty, and had supplied irresistible proofs of Mr Meredith's entire innocence. Thereupon Mr Meredith was promptly released; and as the greater part of the stolen money had been returned by the penitent secretary, the rage of the shareholders had merged into frantic enthusiasm, and the utmost efforts had been made to give Douglas and his young wife a reception that should entirely obliterate the memory of what had taken place.

It is almost unnecessary to add that Douglas was elected by an overwhelming majority, and received numerous votes from those who differed from him politically, but admired the pluck and loyalty he had shown under exceptionally trying circumstances.

WRITERS FOR THE YOUNG.



WHEN Hannah More presented Gladstone the boy with a copy of her *Sacred Dramas* in 1815, with the apology that she did so because she was going out of the world and he was just coming into it, we had a link between the older and the newer literature for children, then almost non-existent. That Hannah More, although now neglected, was a great force for good to her own generation there is no

doubt whatever. She was almost ashamed to confess in her old days that her writings had brought her £30,000, much of which was spent in charity and works of benevolence. To a generation that knows not the *Shepherd of Salisbury Plain* and her hundred and one stories with a purpose, Canon Ainger says, in another connection, that the parable, the fable, and the proverb have had a moral purpose and are responsible for a great deal of the everyday morality of the world. John

Ruskin was brought up on Maria Edgeworth until he inherited the *Arabian Nights* in his tenth year, and Andrew Lang still remembers 'Rosamund' with affection. It may be that Miss Edgeworth and the Aikens represent the influence of Rousseau in the nursery; there is no doubt that Ann and Jane Taylor represent an evangelical revival at the end of the eighteenth century, and worked wonders in interesting and educating children by means of prose and verse; and 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star' still shines in most reading-books, while 'My Mother' still voices the feelings and affections of youth. Aiken and Barbauld's *Evenings at Home* contained that gem, 'Eyes and No Eyes;' Day's *Sandford and Merton* and Maria Edgeworth still find readers—all proving that although the writers for the young were few at the beginning of the century, yet they were large-hearted, large-minded people, else they had never so influenced their generation and lived until now.

Every year witnesses the issue of a host of fresh books for the young, and still the production goes on. So much is this the case that many people are afraid that the juveniles do not always get at the best literature. For instance, Miss Betham-Edwards tells us she got her education from a leather-bound copy of *Shakespeare*; she disapproves of purely children's books. 'I had few in my own childhood, and read only the English classics, and found them entertaining enough. The present fashion of writing story-books especially for children is, I think, a mistake. It tends to weaken their taste for literature, and when they grow older they are not able to appreciate the best forms of literary style.' Harriet Martineau, who must have been no common child, as she was no common woman, says she devoured all *Shakespeare* while sitting on a footstool, reading by the firelight while the rest of the family were still at table. She made shirts with all due diligence, for she was fond of sewing; but it was with Goldsmith, Thomson, or Milton on her lap. Let but noble books be on the shelf, the classics of our language, and the child will get nothing but good. Sir Walter Scott was no believer in writing down to young people, and would have had little sympathy with the cry for extreme simplicity—almost inanity—in many reading-books of the day. 'Bring children,' says Miss C. M. Yonge, 'as soon as possible to stretch up to books above them, provided these books are noble and good.' When a boy has once acquired a keen interest in biographical or historical reading, his taste is for ever elevated. Mr Goschen said once that he liked to see boys and girls amuse themselves with tales of adventure; with stories of gallant deeds and noble men; with stories of the sea, of nations, of wars; with descriptions of scenes different from those in which they live. He much preferred *Alice in Wonderland* to the stories of Tommies and Freddie who read the book. Mrs Molesworth is of opinion

that there should be two sets of books in the children's library—one of books for the young people reading for themselves, and another more advanced to be read by parents and guardians. Children readily listen to an interesting book, considered to be above them, if well read by one they love.

Many men of talent and genius have turned aside from severer and more engrossing labours, and amused themselves in penning something for youth, which in more than one instance has proved their principal passport to remembrance. This is hardly the case with Scott and Dickens, who wrote best for grown-up people. Yet Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* were entirely successful, although the *Child's History of England* by Dickens was not. J. M. Barrie puts *Ivanhoe* only second to *Robinson Crusoe* as a boy's book, and *Quentin Durward* he mentions as Scott's second best book for boys. Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* are classic in their way. John Ruskin succeeded in telling a fairy story perfectly in his *King of the Golden River*, which was penned for his future wife. Thomas Hughes is remembered by *Tom Brown's Schooldays* and its sequel; while Charles Kingsley not only wrote for and dedicated his Greek fairy stories, *The Heroes*, to his children, but also wrote for other children the *Water Babies*, *Glaucus*, and *Madame How and Lady Why*. While young people may read with interest and delight George MacDonald's *Alec Forbes* or *Robert Falconer*, this author has led young people into a world of their own in *At the Back of the North Wind*, *Ranald Bannerman's Boyhood*, or *Guttapercha Willie*. The sombre genius of Nathaniel Hawthorne relaxed in his *Twice-told Tales* and his delightful biographies in *Grandfather's Chair*. Much of Washington Irving also forms good reading for children. Marryat's *Children of the New Forest*, *Masterman Ready*, and his rough and hearty sea-tales are liked by young people, and so are the best stories of Fenimore Cooper. Dana's *Two Years before the Mast* is a classic. Dinah Maria Mulock began her literary career by writing for young people, and was entirely successful in *Cola Monti*, the story of a genius, and many others. Harriet Martineau's *Feats on the Fiord* is better remembered than some of her lessons in political economy. Mary Howitt and Mrs Harriet Beecher Stowe could both charm and instruct young people; as also Mrs Whitney and the author of the *Wide, Wide World*. So could Mrs Oliphant; and Miss C. M. Yonge has done some of her best work in this department. Jean Ingelow turned aside from poetry and wrote *Stories told to a Child*, and others; while Jacob Abbott, A.L.O.E. (Miss Tucker), Isabella Fyvie Mayo, Agnes Giberne, Mrs Marshall, Annie S. Swan, Max Pemberton, and S. R. Crockett have all had plenty of readers. In recognition of Miss C. M. Yonge's 'great services as a pioneer of that religious and high-toned literature for young

people which for the last fifty years has been a special glory of England and the admiration of America and other countries; it has been resolved to found a university scholarship for girls at Winchester High School, bearing her name. Six thousand pounds were asked for—just the amount Miss Yonge herself handed over once for the cause of missions. Other names crowd upon us, such as Miss Alcott, author of *Little Women*; Mrs Hodgson Burnett, author of *Little Lord Fauntleroy*; Kate Douglas Wiggin; the author of *Tip-Cat* and *Laddie*; and Sarah Bolton, author of *Girls Who Became Famous* and quite a small library of excellent short biographies.

Jules Verne has exploited the heavens and the earth for the material for his wonderful romances. W. H. G. Kingston has also filled a large place in the modern boys' library, and so has David Ker, who seems familiar with almost every available region of the world. Ascott R. Hope, clever and industrious as he has been, has never quite come to his own; neither has Andrew Home, Reginald Horsley, nor D. Lawson Johnstone, author of *The Rebel Commodore* and other works. J. M. Barrie reckons Hope's *My Schoolboy Friends* as in some ways more delightful than *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. Max Pemberton, F. Whishaw, Bloundelle Burton, Hugh St Leger, and Frankfort Moore have all plenty of readers. Samuel Smiles is not a boys' writer in the ordinary sense; but there is enough backbone in his books to set up the present generation in the path of perseverance and well-doing. All the classics have been retold and simplified. Rose Selfe has given us Dante's Purgatory in *How Dante Climbed the Mountain*; Mr Church has retold the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and Greek tragedies; Plutarch, the King Arthur Legends; and Northern Sagas have not escaped; nor Shakespeare, as witness *Lamb's Tales*; and we have also a selection called *Tennyson for the Young*. But the story is still the thing, and romance and modern narrative gain both the ear of youth and old age. Sir Walter Besant, for instance, finds *The Three Musketeers* as delightful now as when he sat in a corner, breathless, panting, and followed all a lifelong holiday 'the fortunes of the immortal three who were four.' He asks of a story one thing—'Seize me, and hold me with a grip of steel. Make me deaf and blind to all the world so long as I read in these enchanted pages. Carry me whither thou wilt. Play on me; do with me what thou wilt, at thine own sweet will.' Besant also finds that Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* has the distinctive character of a good story in that it pleases, or rather seizes, every period of life, and appeals to all ages and every age. It has no motive, no moral, and no plot, and yet the boy of twelve reads with delight as well as the older reader. But we have now only left ourselves space for a few particulars about the more modern storytellers for young folks.

'Ballantyne the Brave,' as Stevenson terms him,

began to write for the young about the middle of the century, and kept hard at it until his death at Rome in 1894, having produced during that time upwards of eighty volumes of wholesome and delightful reading. He was a deft and purpose-like workman, with a high moral tone, and imparts useful information in a pleasing way. Withal he has humour of a kind. Six years spent in his youth in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company furnished him with his first literary capital. In 1854, while a partner of T. & A. Constable, Edinburgh, Mr William Nelson, the publisher, who had formed a high opinion of his powers from his *Hudson's Bay*, suggested that he should take to literature as a profession, and begin with a story. Ballantyne, amused at the idea, said he would try to do so. He went to work at once, and produced *Snowflakes and Sunbeams*, which was followed by *Young Fur-Traders* and his ever-popular *Coral Island*, which J. M. Barrie places above *Swiss Family Robinson*. No man was more conscientious in the preparation of his stories. In the writing of *The Lifeboat* he was hand-in-glove with the coxswain of the Ramsgate lifeboat; and when he came to lecture in Edinburgh on the same subjects, he started a movement which furnished lifeboats for our coasts. By way of preparation for writing *The Lighthouse*, he lived for three weeks in the Bell Rock Lighthouse; for *Fighting the Flames* he careered through the streets of London on fire-engines, clad in pea-jacket and a black leather helmet. He prepared himself by travel or interviews in the same way for his later books. Ballantyne regarded his power of writing as a direct gift from God, and trained himself for his mission by the experience thus gained in writing his stories.

Mr G. A. Henty now stands an easy first in point of popularity amongst writers for young people. It is somewhat remarkable, did we not remember the age of Defoe when he penned *Robinson Crusoe*, that the most popular present day writers for the young are none of them juveniles. Jules Verne is seventy, and Henty and George Manville Fenn are nearer that age than sixty. Born in 1832, Henty did not graduate at Cambridge, but rather in the rough-and-tumble school of experience into which he plunged when engaged in the Purveyors' Department in the Crimea. Later, as special correspondent of the *Standard*, he saw life in many aspects during the Austro-Italian and Franco-German wars; he was in the Abyssinian and Ashanti expeditions, and has written books about both campaigns. He was also with Garibaldi in the Tyrol. Probably as part justification of his own success as a novelist, as well as in his capacity of writer for the young, he has pointed out that scarcely one of the prominent novelists of the day is a university man, and women who know nothing of the classics write as good fiction as men. His experience while editing a short-lived boys' paper

called the *Union-Jack* has also led him to remark upon the lack of talent in composition conspicuous in the efforts of young people. Henty himself early excelled in composition, and wrote his first novel at twenty. He considered it very bad, and it was never published. He began to write for young people in this way: he used always to have his children with him for an hour after dinner, and would then tell them stories. These stories were continuous, and often lasted for weeks. It struck him one day that if his own young folks liked these tales, a larger public outside might also like them. This led him to write and then read one of his stories, and when it was of the proper length he offered it to a publisher. It was promptly accepted, and Christmas would now hardly look like Christmas without one or two stories from his versatile pen.

Mr George Manville Fenn, who, like Mr Henty, has also figured frequently as a grown-up people's novelist, and probably comes next to him as a boys' favourite, has been in his time schoolmaster, private tutor, journalist, proprietor of *Once a Week*, and a frequent contributor to *Chambers's*. Any facility he has in composition he declares comes from constantly writing out the ideas that have more or less impressed him in his career. He believes, as R. M. Ballantyne did, that a talent for writing is in-born, 'just as one is given a melodious voice, to another a handsome personal appearance, to another the power to speak in public forcibly and well. Of course these gifts can be largely developed, but I am sure the genius must be there or the cultivation would be a sorry affair. In my own case, I was as a boy thrown very much on my own resources, and books were, I may say, my only friends; consequently I devoured everything I came across, good, bad, and indifferent; but still I naturally possessed a great love of reading.' Before beginning a book he turns the subject over in his mind, then tries to realise and individualise his characters. After making many notes, he tries to place himself in the position of the different characters of his story. Then he goes briskly at it—so briskly, indeed, that his copy is sometimes a puzzle to the compositor unless typewritten. In most of Mr Fenn's recent books the action and development of the story is carried forward mainly by means of dialogue. How popular his books are may be seen by watching any young person engrossed in them, or by consulting a librarian. In one library in a large town last year his *Real Gold* was issued sixty-seven times, and was the most popular book on the list. *Dick o' the Fens* was not far behind, having been issued sixty-four times.

R. L. Stevenson first caught the ear of youth and age by his *Treasure Island* and its successors, *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*, the first two of which were contributed to Mr James Henderson's *Young Folks' Paper*, where they did not attract any special attention. Stevenson's first title for *Treasure Island* was

The Sea-Cook, which was altered as it now stands at Henderson's request. It was begun with much 'complacency' while living with his father at Kinnaird, above Pitlochry. Stevenson, counting on one boy in his daily reading aloud of the result of his industry, found two in his audience, as his father, the late Thomas Stevenson, of lighthouse fame, enjoyed the story as much as the writer. Stevenson's own father told stories, 'and every night of his life he put himself to sleep with stories which dealt perpetually with ships, roadside inns, robbers, old sailors, and commercial travellers before the era of steam.' Dr A. H. Japp, after a visit, walked off with the completed manuscript of *Treasure Island* in his pocket, which he bore to London, with the result we know.

The Rev. Charles Dodgson, author of *Alice in Wonderland*, who had a weakness for never owning its authorship, began, like Mr Henty and other notable story-tellers, by relating his wonderful narratives to young people. Mrs Hargreaves (daughter of Dean Liddell) says that most of his stories were told to herself and her sister, now Mrs Skene, when on river expeditions to Nuneham or Godstow, near Oxford. 'I was Secunda, and Tertia was my sister Edith. I believe the beginning of *Alice* was told one summer afternoon, when the sun was so burning that we had landed in the meadows down the river, deserting the boat to take refuge in the only bit of shade to be found, which was under a new-made hayrick.' In answer to a request to tell them a story, this delightful tale was begun. *Alice's* adventures were written down also by request, and so became when published the heritage and delight of every English child.

Edward Lear, author of *The Book of Nonsense*, was born in 1812, and passed away at Villa Tennyson, San Remo, in 1888. His famous book, like *Alice in Wonderland*, was prepared for the delectation of children, in this instance those of Lord Derby, and was not at first intended for publication. On its appearance its success was enormous, and John Ruskin has placed on record his appreciation of the book. Heinrich Hoffman's *Struwwelpeter* arose from the inability of the Doctor to find suitable Christmas books for his son of three years of age. He secured a book of blank pages, into which he speedily drew his pictures, and added the rhymes. When published one parent said, 'Dear Doctor, what a delight you have given us! I have a child of three who can recite the whole contents of the book.'

Sir Evelyn Wood wrote from the Soudan that he had cried over *Lactus*, by Juliana Horatia Ewing, and her *Jackanapes* has been called 'an exquisite bit of finished work—a Meissonier in its way.' Mrs Molesworth thinks that Mrs Gatty's magazine, *Aunt Judy*, where many of Mrs Ewing's

stories appeared, was almost an ideal one for young people, from its excellence and freedom from anything objectionable. Some people may think Mr Swinburne a little extravagant in his praises of Mrs Molesworth when he says that since the death of George Eliot 'there is none left whose touch is so exquisite and masterly, whose love is so thoroughly according to knowledge, and whose bright and sweet invention is so fruitful, and so truthful, and so delightful.' Mrs Molesworth (Mary Louisa Stewart) was born in Holland in 1839, and was educated at home, and partly in Switzerland. When she had children of her own she began to write for their delectation. The first suggestion that she should publish came from her friend, Sir Noel Paton, and she sent *Tell me a Story* to Macmillan, and it was promptly accepted, and for the past twenty-four years she has had one or more volumes every season. Her early novels appeared under the pen-name of Ennis Graham. It seems to have been easy for her to write for young people, as she has always had an especial love for children, for flowers, and for the country. Her own earliest and best training came by translating both from French and German. In preparing her books she does not believe in copying her MS., but writes as she wishes the words to stand, the formation of the sentences being then the work of the brain 'unassisted by the sight of the written words. I believe that this leads to great precision of thought, and I believe, too, that it makes the style fresh and vigorous, besides greatly lessening the manual labour.'

After Mrs Molesworth no name is better or more favourably known than L. T. Meade (Mrs Toulmin Smith), daughter of a rector of Nohoval, County Cork. She wrote her first book at seventeen, came to London, studied East End life, which gave colour to many of her early stories in the *Sunday Magazine* and elsewhere, and for six years acted as editor of *Atalanta*. Her own children have sat for their portraits, notably one child who appears in *Daddy's Boy*. Her industry and versatility continue unabated. At first she made copies of her manuscript, but she never does so now. All her stories are dictated, and sometimes she gets so carried away by the movement and action in the narrative that she hardly knows how it is all going to end.

The ten most popular books for children of ten years, according to the booksellers and as given in the *Academy*, are :

Alice in Wonderland.	Mrs Molesworth's Stories.
Robinson Crusoe.	Eric and St Winifred's.
Lang's Fairy Books.	Jungle Book.
Andersen's Fairy Tales.	Grimm's Fairy Tales.
Water Babies.	Treasure Island.

The multiplication of books for both old and young more than keeps pace with the demand. Care and judgment are required in order to select wisely, but never in the history of the

world was there a richer and wider selection of books which charm and entertain, or impart useful information, and give moral impulse besides.

'VERSE.'

You say the glamour of romance,
When told in song, has passed away;
That few will give a second glance
At what is known as 'verse' to-day.

'The present is a busy age,
And who amongst us has the time
To idly sit and con the page
That holds a minor poet's rhyme?'

You smile because he loves to tune
His lyre and voice the charms of Spring—
The rosy dawn, the golden noon,
The sheen upon the swallow's wing.

So well you know the ancient theme
That treats of April shine and shower,
The music of the crystal stream,
The beauty of the woodland flower.

Oh yes! he does not soar on wings
Which spurn the earth and cleave the sky;
He but transforms the lowly things
That in our common pathways lie.

For he whose silver measure strives
To clothe the meanest weed with grace,
Believes that even humblest lives
Need not be coarse and commonplace.

And if his simple strain is heard
Above the clamour of the throng,
And purer founts of thought are stirred,
The world is better for his song.

If what you count of little worth
But dries a tear or soothes a pain,
Or gives one noble feeling birth,
His talent is not used in vain.

And if his theme is seldom new,
And if the minor notes prevail,
What matters so the song be true?
Is every bird a nightingale?

And while he sees that Spring is fair,
And finds a poem in a rose,
And hears God's music everywhere,
Why should he yoke himself to Prose?

The ivy cannot choose but climb,
The blossom cannot choose but spring;
And—though you may not read his rhyme—
Ah well! ah well! he still must sing.

E. MATHESON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



THE GOLDEN LILY.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT.

CHAPTER I.—THE FIRST PARTNER.

PERHAPS nowhere else in the world is the struggle of man's determined will against the adverse conditions of nature so hard as on the goldfields of Western Australia. What the daring and resolute pioneers of this region suffered, what adventuring prospectors suffer to-day, in their quest for gold can hardly be realised at home. The grim irony of the geographer sprinkles the map with lakes and rivers, but the mirage which mocks the fainting explorer is not more delusive. The land is in truth an arid desert of rock and sand and scrub, and the 'lakes' are mere dry, saline beds. Where water does exist—the miners strike it sometimes in their deep shafts—it is brackish. On the surface there is none to moisten the parched lips and swollen tongue of the prospector.

But this desert is full of gold, and the thirst for gold is a more powerful incentive to effort than the thirst for water is a deterrent. Men will dare all and everything in quest of the yellow metal. That the typical miner wastes in wild and generous dissipation the precious dust which he has gathered in patient privation does not in the least moderate the cheerful resolution with which he sets forth into the desert again when the fruit of his labour is squandered and he has sufficiently recovered from the effects of the bout. Unremitting toil while it lasts, and unreflecting indulgence afterwards, form the rule of many a man's life on the goldfields. And at last, after winning and wasting thousands of pounds in this fashion, he probably dies penniless, or is found dead in the bush from thirst or hunger.

Besides the regular mining population, who are always ready to rush from one field to another more promising, the discovery of a new goldfield attracts all sorts and conditions of men. It would

be hard to name a calling or profession, a rank or station of life, unrepresented in a mining camp. Just as difficult would it be to indicate a type of human character, good, bad, and indifferent, that is not to be found there. Law there is—British law—on the Australian goldfields; but in the earlier days of a new settlement public opinion is the more influential instrument of government, and it seldom or never goes wrong. There is a lack of order, there may be lawlessness at times, but the habits of the wild mining towns of Western America do not prevail, and an honest man's life is secure wherever he goes.

Perhaps, when all is told, the best type of all this motley community is the genuine, toiling, reckless miner himself, who never can become other than he is, because he never cares to keep the gold which his labour brings him. The getting of it is the salt of his life, dominated as this getting is by a supreme element of chance or luck, whereby one man after a few hours' work may come upon a 'pocket' of gold worth a thousand pounds, and the next man to him obtains no more out of months of patient toil than is sufficient to procure him his frugal tea and 'damper' and salt beef.

While it is difficult for persons at home to realise the conditions of a miner's life, it is perhaps quite as difficult for the sunburnt denizen of the goldfields to comprehend the dismay of the adventurer from home on his first arrival at a mining camp or town. It is hardly possible for a young man, leaving England with his heart buoyant with hope of the fortune that may await him on the goldfields, to approach famous Coolgardie through a desert of meat tins and dilapidated eucalyptus trees, and try to gaze around through the clouds of reddish-brown dust which envelop the place, without at least a momentary sinking

of the spirits. The intense heat and the thick dust parch both skin and throat, and the blessed water which both crave for has to be bought by the gallon—like beer or milk in England.

It was a curious chance that threw into companionship, at a drinking bar in Coolgardie, two pronounced examples of the opposite types—a soft and somewhat disheartened youth from England, and a hard and grizzled miner. They were as unlike in outward appearance as any two human creatures could be, and to those who noticed the intimacy that sprang up between them the thing was a curiosity. Everybody drank in the place, and many drank too much; but although a particular bar was the daily resort of these two individuals, no frequenters of the place drank less than they did. This fact the barmaid, to whose special services they were partial, could vouch for.

Jim Solus (as he was called from the unusual circumstance that he never went prospecting with a partner) had come from South Australia almost with the first rush. Since then he had made some half-dozen solitary expeditions into the bush, bringing back on each occasion as much gold as kept him in Coolgardie for a month or so. Beyond this, his prospecting had been without visible result. Other men had made 'finds' and disposed of them successfully; Jim Solus remained a dry-blower, and appeared satisfied to remain one. At this many persons marvelled, for Jim had the reputation (how acquired no one could tell) of possessing a keen scent for payable gold.

It was drawing near the conclusion of Jim's usual month's rest when the young fellow from England attracted his observation. The youth always came for his refreshment to Jim's barmaid, and this might have been why Jim noticed him. He was a quiet, good-looking lad, observant and apparently shy; but these were hardly qualities to arouse interest in a tough old miner. And the interest of Jim Solus was aroused. The pretty barmaid noticed it and was puzzled.

Jim invited the young man to drink with him, but there was nothing in this. When, however, Jim talked a good deal to him regarding his friends in the old country, and his hopes and prospects here; and when, a day or two later, the young fellow told the barmaid that Jim had made him remove from the hotel to his own wooden hut at the back of Bayley Street, it was evident that Jim had taken a fancy. And, regarding the new arrival critically without looking at him (a thing which some girls know how to do), and thinking of his modest and quiet manners, the barmaid admitted to herself that the young fellow was a likely object enough for a sun-baked old digger to take a fancy to.

This barmaid was, as has been said, an attractive young woman. The Coolgardie barmaids are a peculiar product of Australia, and work very hard, but earn a great deal of money. Their wages are

high, for they often have to dispense liquors to the thirsty crowd not only all day, but great part of the night as well. The miners, however, treat them with a rough politeness of their own, and the presence of these young women has a restraining influence upon their language which is very noticeable. The girls are favourites with them, and are not only put up to every 'good thing' going, but are presented with shares in the miners' adventures as well.

'Jim,' said the barmaid to the young man, 'appears to have taken a liking to you.'

'I wonder why, Miss Lily? I think he is awfully good-natured! He does not even know my name.'

'Oh, yes, he does. You told him a day or two ago. Dicky Hulme, isn't it?'

The young fellow half-turned his face to her with a sudden movement (he had just been looking out into the dusty street) and coloured a little. What was it? Nothing more than the way she uttered the words 'Dicky Hulme'—a way that was unconsciously soft and musical.

'I had forgotten it,' he answered. 'Jim has forgotten it, too—of that I am quite certain.'

It was now the barmaid's turn to blush a little for having betrayed so careful a memory.

'Yes, Jim is very good-hearted, I think,' she observed. 'Miners mostly are; but Jim doesn't have much luck.'

'Ah,' said Dicky Hulme pensively; 'I suppose it's mostly luck.'

'Hard work and luck,' she replied, and left him to attend another customer.

A day or two later, as the two men smoked at the door of their little hut, the old miner suddenly observed:

'Dicky, you are falling in love with that barmaid.'

'Jim, I say, now, what puts that in your head?'

'Because I have eyes. She likes you, too—but that don't count for much. I want to say this, that, whether she cares for you or not (at the present time), you had best take your header at once. In a week or ten days we must be off.'

'And you'd advise me, Jim,' said the young fellow, much amused by the simplicity and sincerity of Jim's advice, 'to fall in love with a barmaid before tackling my work?'

'Certainly,' was the answer. 'You have neither father nor mother, sister nor brother. What do you want to find the gold for, then, except you have a sweetheart?'

There was something in this—a good deal, the young man admitted. But he showed some hesitancy still. Jim's observation had not deceived him in the matter—Dicky Hulme was falling in love. But now, admitting this fact, the dissatisfied thought annoyed him—she was only a barmaid!

'Do you really think, Jim—you have been so good-natured towards me,' he added, 'and you know everything out here so well that I would trust you in anything—do you think I—I ought to let myself care about—a barmaid?'

'Which shows,' observed Jim, 'that you do care for her. Very natural it is, too. A barmaid? Well, they are all first-rate girls—hard-working, honest girls. But Miss Lily is the best of them.'

The young man did not dispute this assertion.

'Look here,' Jim continued, beginning to perceive Hulme's point; 'we respect our barmaids out here, and think them good enough for the best of us. What are we? Pshaw! this isn't England. I hope you'll never get a worse girl in case you don't get Miss Lily.'

It requires little to demolish the half-hearted objections of a young man in such a case. Hulme's hesitation—if it was at bottom real—soon vanished.

'And do you fancy she—she cares for me, Jim?'

He was sorry for putting the question, for the miner shrugged his shoulders and answered coldly: 'How should I know? She doesn't know much about you. It is a thing you must find out for yourself.'

'At any rate, Jim, you will tell me all you know about her?'

'Not now, my lad. Go on with your love business, if you like. What has anything I know about the girl got to do with it? I know nothing to Miss Lily's discredit—if that's what you are fishing for,' he said, turning round and looking the young man full in the face.

'No, no, Jim!' he quietly replied, reddening with shame. 'God forbid I should have such a thought. I would fight any man that said a word against her!'

'That's it,' remarked the other, with satisfaction. 'Well, hurry on the business, Dicky, and some evening in the bush I will tell you all I know about her. I hope you'll win her. She is a good girl.'

Jim Solus went back to Bayley Street for some tobacco. Left alone, Hulme had to admit that, at first blush, falling in love (with a barmaid or any other maid) didn't seem precisely the most prudent way of making a start in a new country. But there are two sides to every question. Supposing a fellow, he reasoned, did fall in love, and had fair hopes of winning the lady, could there be a finer incentive to exertion? Success in such case means more—much more—than gold! What disappointment meant he did not then speculate. Success was what he fixed his mind upon. With a twofold prize to be won, success was bound to come. Jim Solus, doubtless, could have told him stories of young men who went away to the diggings full of hope, and grew gray and worn out with disappointment, and died at

last in the bush; and of sweethearts who waited the weary years for them, until the eyes grew dim with watching and the heart died with its last hope. But it was not Jim's vocation to talk of such things to a young man just in love, but rather to encourage him.

Had Jim himself lacked the incentive which he was advising Hulme to draw from the barmaid's eyes, seeing that after years of labour he was still a failure, and apparently a contented one?

In a week or ten days, Jim had said, they were to be off. Naturally the young fellow was impatient to make the start, and full of high hopes. But his hopes were doomed to disappointment. In a day or two he began to feel ill. At first he thought nothing of this, and tried to shake it off. He went down to the bar as usual, but drank only lemonade, and more than once he fancied that the barmaid was looking at him attentively. Then, one night after retiring to bed, with a headache about which he said nothing to Jim, he was seized with a violent shivering fit. His limbs ached as well as his head. In the morning he was in a fever.

'Typhoid,' said the doctor whom Jim summoned. 'Is there any one to take care of him here?'

'Unfortunately,' replied Jim, 'I've got to start prospecting, and have all my swag ready. He was to have come with me. But I'll get some one to look after him.'

A miner's wife who lived near was applied to, and willingly promised to attend to the patient in Jim's absence. But Jim was not entirely satisfied with this arrangement. He went down to Bayley Street, and getting a glass of whisky from the girl called Miss Lily, stood over it in anxious abstraction for several minutes.

'My mate, Miss Lily,' he observed at length, 'is down with typhoid.'

'Poor fellow—so soon,' said the girl. 'I thought last night, by his looks, he was ill.'

'And what's worse, I must start for the bush.'

'Who will look after him, Jim?'

'Why, Jack Brady's wife promises to see to him. She'll do her best, I know; but she has her own house and children to look after as well. I thought, Miss Lily!—' he added, with some hesitation, and then stopped.

'I'll do anything I can, if you wish me, Jim,' said the girl, interpreting his thought. 'That is, whenever I have time to spare.'

'My word, Miss Lily, but you are a stunning good girl!' exclaimed the old miner. 'Well, I'll leave you money enough to get the poor lad everything he wants. And if I have any luck this venture you shall share it.'

'And the poor fellow was going to be dividing mates with you!'

'So he is, and so he will be, if there's any

luck to divide,' said the miner, with emphasis. 'I must start the day after to-morrow, but I'll see you again about him.'

'What direction are you going this time, Jim?'

'I intend to strike eastward from Twenty-five-Mile. I think there is something to be struck out that way.'

The fever went ahead with poor Hulme. Everything was done for him that the rude conditions of the place rendered possible. Mrs Brady was assiduous in her attention every moment she could spare from her own domestic duties; and the kind-hearted barmaid not only came several times during the day to perform any little nursing office which those brief intervals enabled her to do, but sat up with the half-delirious patient during the night, when she needed rest so badly herself. The patient endurance of women is wonderful. Many a rough miner, on the bed of sickness, has had cause to bless the gentle hands and warm hearts of West Australian barmaids, when the desert bush afforded no other nurse or doctor.

Jim Solus, with his condenser and other 'swag'

loaded on a small country cart, started on his solitary expedition with a feeling of depression which he had never experienced before.

'It's all on account of the lad,' he argued with himself, as he trudged along the arid track in a blazing tropical sun. 'But he'll be all right when I come back. Mrs Brady and Miss Lily will take care of him—especially Miss Lily. Isn't she a stunning girl! And if I have any luck this venture she shall share it.'

Jim, it may be mentioned, had drawn all his money from the bank and given it in charge to the barmaid for the benefit of the patient.

'In a couple of months,' added Jim, after smoking for a hundred yards or so, 'the lad will be all right again, and by that time, maybe, I'll be back once more in Coolgardie. I needn't be so anxious about him,' he said, trying to shake off that sinking of the spirits which he ascribed to young Hulme's illness.

And so he resolutely set his face to the bush, for a quarter where he was convinced there was payable gold to be found, and where he meant to mark off a double claim for himself and 'partner.'

RICKYARDS AND ORCHARDS.

THE first real harbinger of the coming spring is the chaffinch. Who has not sat to listen to him and his hundred fellows in garden, orchard, and meadow, and felt that the sun grew perceptibly warmer, the south wind blew yet softer, and that the spring came on with surer and steadier steps as all around fell, with that so sweet monotony, the gentle trill, followed by the descending ripple of the final notes?

The spring passes into summer, and in the full-throated chorus none but the keen observer picks out each singer from the throng; none but he notes the gradual dropping out of first one and then another performer. Most of us only awaken to the silence of the early autumn to find it broken by our faithful, crimson-bosomed companion of the coming days of 'winter and foul weather.'

Save to those who sigh for Southern skies and perpetual summer, the suggestions of the robin's voice are altogether pleasant. Summer has its drawbacks; surely one of them is the inability we feel to appreciate that luxury of luxuries—a good fire. But the robin sings the adieu of hot, stifling nights, and the welcome of long evenings; above all, the returning power of those silent, patient occupants of our bookshelves, so sadly neglected in the summer for the louder and more obtrusive attractions of garden, river, and shore. Already September evenings are long and

chilly, and we return penitent to study-chair and paper-knife.

But September days are possessed of a magic power to draw us afield, and we yield more willingly with the thought that they must be used while they remain.

Perfect September weather. There will be enough of frost in the early morning to make a cheerful blaze acceptable at breakfast-time; fog there will be too, probably. 'Perfect weather, indeed! It will be far enough from that if there be any trace of fog about,' says some one. Fog, however, there will likely be; and let me tell you, my carping friend, that there are fogs and fogs. I am speaking of British weather, remember, and that for the benefit of people prepared to be therewith content. Such will not willingly relinquish the pure, clean fog of the country morning—the vaporous veil thinning and rolling off this way and that before the silent, conquering sun; opening overhead to show a patch of pale-blue sky; retreating into the wide shelter of the great hedgerows; curling away from the rippling shallows of the river; and finally dissolving into a haunting blue haze, throwing no chill into the warm stillness of the day, but ready to steal forth again over the level meadows of the river-side when the sun has dropped into the west.

To the lover of the country, autumn—autumn in my own county—presents features not to be matched at any other of the year's four seasons

for picturesqueness, and also for what, to the genuine 'yokel,' is better than any artistic grace—pleasant suggestions of comfort and good cheer: rickyards, with their solid promise of food for man and beast; orchards and hopyards giving promise that American cider and German beer shall not, for this season at least, drive the British farmer quite out of the field.

Hay and corn harvests, with which the most confirmed grumblers can scarce find fault, have made this autumn's rickyards more than usually cheerful sights. And I doubt again if there are many places which for solid comfort excel or even equal a well-filled rickyard. One sees in it a provision of food for patient toilers for many a long month, warmth and rest o' nights for many weary limbs. Even to look no farther than the present moment, a rick is a comfortable thing. There is no such shelter from the blast, no such warm and fragrant bed, as a hayrick partly cut. Dry hay and straw seem the very embodiment of the idea of snugness and shelter.

The great hayrick, long in the sides and broad in the ends, is the size of many a cottage. 'Tis almost a pity, probably thinks its owner as he surveys it admiringly, that the heavy crop throughout the country will bring down the price of next year's old hay from nearly five to below three pounds a ton. Five pounds is such a good, round, comfortable sum—a farmer's, a John Bull's sum, like the guinea to which he still clings when he buys or sells his horses and cattle. What a pity that we have allowed the cold, thin 'sovereign' to oust it! There is precise, thin-blooded frugality in the very syllables.

The wheatricks he eyes with more unalloyed complacency. Wheat has risen—seems inclined to rise still. His neighbour has not stopped to emulate his well-thatched ricks, which stand high and dry on the stone staddles; the round, the oval, with the nob of straw on the summit of the gently-rising peak, as though one might lift off the whole covering of shining yellow thatch as one raises the cover from a dish.

At the next farm, the wheat being 'got' in good order for immediate thrashing, the farmer thinks the 'nimble ninepence better than the slow shilling.' So across the three or four intervening fields and hedgerows rises the thick, white smoke of the engine. It shoots up swiftly to some twoscore yards from the funnel's mouth and then lingers, a dense flattened ball, undispersed in the still air, and not unbecomingly as the sun irradiates its fleecy substance.

The silent autumn air throbs with the low hum of revolving fly-wheel and band and busy thrasher. There is no discord or harshness in the sound; it is a contented country voice, droning in tone, yet steadily busy. Only if the man who 'feeds' the hopper slackens in the regularity of his supply does the hum rise into something of a whistling shrillness, which falls again to its former

contented pitch as fresh sheaves are thrown to the hungry maw.

A yard where the thrasher is at work does not, to the onlooker, bear out the fear of machinery displacing manual labour. There is no dearth of hands here. The engine may run quietly, to some extent unattended, for half-an-hour at a time; but the man who drives it must not engage in any other work which will prevent him from giving a frequent glance at the furnace and the steam and water gauges. He cannot reckon upon giving more than an overlooking eye and occasional hand elsewhere, so he is generally the head-man, the bailiff, where one is acknowledged by that name. If the engine and thrasher are from a contractor, men are usually sent with them to take all responsibility of the machinery; if they are the farmer's own property—and most large agriculturists can now find pretty constant work for steam all the year round—then we may be sure that the careful master will not be far off.

At large farms water is often laid on from an adjacent stream by means of a water-wheel; but if this is not the case, or the thrashing is going on in a distant rickyard or field corner, there will be a boy busy journeying to and fro with the water-cart. There must be one man at the hopper to 'feed,' and at least two on the rick to supply him; another to attend and change the swiftly-filling sack where the stream of shining wheat pours from its square wooden gutter; yet others to deal with the thrashed straw duly thrown out in its place, the accumulation of which round the machine cannot be permitted for a minute. To these add an odd man—there are always odd men hovering necessarily round a large job of this kind—add these, and you get a substantial total. Many of the hands must be 'extras,' too, for the ordinary work must go on. The wagoners and their lads are not here, for the teams must not stand idle in this 'open' weather, but are already turning the white stubble, from which this very wheat was so lately drawn, into shining, purple-brown furrows again.

Unfortunately utility and beauty do not now always go hand-in-hand. We can hardly expect the hard-pressed farmer to put the latter quality first. Corrugated iron is too cheap and universally useful to be ignored by the practical man. A long range of this material, erected on pillars as an open barn, not only effectually thatches the ricks, but, when they have disappeared from beneath it, serves as a wainhouse and general shelter.

The shining length of convex metal is certainly far from welcome to the artistic eye; when painted a deep reddish-brown, however, and viewed among plentiful shade of surrounding foliage, it is much improved. And, after all, it has never been pretended that farming was an

occupation carried on solely from an ornamental point of view. Very few trades are so; and if it has happened that the various successive scenes of the farmer's year have till the last few decades resolved themselves into a series of the most charming tableaux, the artist must look upon that fact as an entirely gratuitous benefit for which he has to be thankful while it lasts, and must refrain from complaints if a needful change in the farmer's methods deprives him of one or two links in the chain.

However, the ruffled lover of the beautiful may surely find the wherewithal to soothe his spirits in the orchards; it will take many new methods to make them unlovely. For him the virtue of an orchard lies to no small extent in its age; and happily, at present, new orchards are in a distinct minority. Another good quality is a certain air of general unkemptness; and whether that be an economical evil or not, it is usually not far to seek.

They are looking their best now, the orchards, not the least of my county's many beauties. There have been heavy rains since the gathering of the early corn harvest—before, indeed, certain laggard fields could show a clean surface—and, consequently, the grass has a soft greenness not always seen in autumn. The tall pears which tower above the general level of the orchard trees are resplendent in every shade of crimson. The damsons gleam with a pallid yellow; but the damson is more general among the gardens and in the cottage hedgerows than in the orchard ranks. The sunbeams fall on bright globes of shining fruit, red, yellow, and green, among the more sober leaf-tints; and these various gleams of colour are answered from below by the gathered heaps on the ground.

The idea of a farmer getting a profit in hard cash from his orchards is to a certain extent modern. Profit of a sort, of course, he looked for, but it was an indirect one. He made cider from the fruit after his own traditions, and he and his household and his farm-servants drank it. Not they alone, but every drover and messenger and hanger-on of the farmer's trade who came to the door knew that whatever else might be wanting, there would be cider enough and to spare. If there came an unusually prolific year of fruit, and it occurred to the farmer that perhaps he was making more drink than would supply his needs and keep in sound condition for the next twelve months, he would perhaps sell a cask or two to some acquaintance or to a publican in the market town.

I wonder how many of my farming friends would care to admit that a decade or two ago, when prices were persistently falling, and they themselves were talking loudly of the workhouse, it was the suggestion of the 'missus' that the fruit might be more profitably sold than turned into cider, unlimited in quantity but—some of it

—doubtful in quality? There will be mighty difficulties in the way of adopting the lady's suggestion, and she must be a woman of force of character if she wants to carry it through. Old custom—'Never have sold the bit of fruit'—therefore, &c. Doubts as to where to look for a purchaser; doubts, one being found, as to his stability financially. Much correspondence, too; altogether, a transaction very novel and out of the usual way of farmer's business.

But presently a satisfactory market is found: pretty close at hand, too—only in the town some five or six miles away, so that there will be no railway business, rates, &c. But, behold! the buyer insists that all the several kinds of fruit—and the farmer has some half-dozen scattered up and down throughout his acres of orcharding—must be kept carefully distinct. 'Redstreaks,' 'Normans'—the white, the strawberry, and the others, must all come to the weighbridge unmixed. Not a difficult thing, you think, the separate kinds growing each on their separate trees, and therefore falling, when shaken, into their own heaps. Quite so; but then it is contrary to custom, which is a very steep and awkward stile to surmount. For although the farmer may have been in the habit of reserving a few bushels from one or two favourite trees to make a special cask for his own drinking, yet the bulk has gone into hodge-podge, one sort with another, the ripe with the rotten.

But the price offered for ripe fruit in good condition is really surprisingly large, and he is willing to strain a point or two, at any rate as an experiment. So two or three wagon-loads come creaking into the town, the wheels thick with the orchard mud, the wagoner and his boys staring about them and asking half-sceptically—the whole idea is unusual, and therefore may be perhaps a hoax—for 'this 'ere place where they do make the cider.' That weighbridge, again, is a hard bit of iron to swallow. By the bushel is the farmer's mode of selling his fruit, if he is to sell it at all; he has occasionally sold a little table and cooking fruit that way since the children have grown up and less was required at home. But at that long range of new brick buildings, where there is a gas-engine and much shafting and curious machinery—from the sight of which inquiring agriculturists are rather rigidly excluded—the go-ahead gentlemen and their clerks in the office quite smile at 'per bushel,' and recognise the ton weight as the only standard by which they can draw cheques. All this has been duly made matter of previous stipulation; but nevertheless the carter probably appears at the warehouse door without having weighed the wagon at the town weighbridge. Must he go down there with it again, then? Yes; it appears he must, and, moreover, return thither afterwards with the empty wain and get that weighed too; and must, above all, take care of the weight-ticket, which will be produced in due time, moist and torn

and crumpled, for payment. It is a troublesome business altogether.

But in time the cheque is duly drawn; and the bank duly cashes it, after but a glance from the cashier's keen eyes. And really the amount is quite substantial, as the 'missus' does not fail many times to point out. And certainly that arrangement of unlimited cider was very unsatisfactory—the men always in the cider cellar; for, as for locking up, the granary was quite trouble enough without putting the whole place under lock and key. The proposal of no cider at all for general work, or an allowance within the strictest limits, with an extra weekly shilling or sixpence, is well received by the men. There will be a much heavier consignment sent in to the cider-works next autumn, and a correspondingly larger cheque.

And really it is astonishing how much farther the crop seems to go; there is quite a cheerful row of casks in the cellar after all. This is accounted for by remembering that here, as elsewhere, profusion tends to waste. In a good season the trees were loaded; there would be no stint in the filling of the barrel-shaped wooden 'bottles' that ride in the tail of the wagon when it goes to town, and hang on the collar-hames of the horses as they go afield. No need to be particular or to fret oneself over a few bushels or a few score bushels rotting on the ground—the pigs will have them, or what is left of them. But put a definite substantial price 'per ton' on 'Normans;' let it be known that the dark purple-red 'Old Foxwhelps' are worth almost anything we choose to ask, and forthwith we will view the orchard with a keener eye. From our gnarled immemorial trees have we been gathering fruit to press into muddy liquor, which is swilled down the throats of carters and cowmen; and behold we journey to London, to the Islington Show, or what not, and, as we sit in a restaurant, liquor is called for by the names of these very trees—called for and produced in bottles dainty with wrapping-paper and silver foil; a Latin motto, too, on the label. We see it decanted, creaming slightly and delicately, and we see it discussed with gusto and much approval. If these things are so, no wonder that our cheque is drawn for a figure so pleasing to contemplate.

This, or something like this, has gone on within moderately recent times; and, indeed, to some extent still goes on; for new ideas and ways are not adopted universally in the agricultural world. There are farmers who, if they light on this paper—but I feel pretty secure; they have some-

thing else to do—will laugh at many of my remarks as coming 'a day behind the fair.' There are others—a small class perhaps—to whom it may offer a new idea or two. No profession or business embraces wider ranges of class than farming, and degrees of intelligence and information vary accordingly.

But from the artist's point of view this is a digression. He need, however, be under no immediate apprehension of seeing any time-honoured old-world item of the beautiful swept away. The cottage-farmer still makes, and will make for years to come, his own liquor from his own fruit. And fortunately it is precisely the homestead and buildings of the cottage-farmer that stand highest in the order of artistic merit. The improvements on his holding are not so extensive or conspicuous as on that of his neighbour—the gentleman-farmer. The back door of the house—sometimes, indeed, the front door—opens into the fold-yard without any circumlocution, the fold-gate lets you direct into the orchard, and thus the house with its thatched roof and quaint windows, the fold with its rickety buildings, and the sloping orchard with its gnarled and twisted trees and its heaps of shining fruit, combine to form one delightful picture.

The row of empty casks drawn up in the yard, and the horsehair pressing-cloths spread on the fence to dry, tell what is going on. From the mill-house, too, comes the oft-repeated shout which cheers the plodding horse in his steady round. Ceaselessly the great stone wheel trundles on in the circular trough, while around it surges a muddy mass of thick and uninviting pulp, which, when sufficiently liquid, is transferred to the press and placed in layers between the cloths aforesaid. For the very squeamish, perhaps, the operation of cider-making—old style—is one of the many in the food department of life upon which it is as well not to look. But we are not squeamish, knowing that uncommonly good liquor has been made in many a gloomy hovel where the sanitary inspector is unknown and unthought of; and we shall have no qualms when our special cask comes home a month or two later. For, in spite of works in the town, and silver foil and Latin mottoes, there are handy men in the county yet; dry old 'fies,' who, with a few bushels of good fruit, and the old stone mill and the old tools, can turn out a cask of cider worth drinking yet. Whether there are men growing up to replace them is another question; it is to be hoped so, for they grow very old—they, and the men who used to thatch the ricks.



VINDICATION.

By MARY KERNAHAN.

IN THREE PARTS.—PART I.

IT was a wild night in late October when I drew rein at last before the inn. How the wind blew! The dead leaves as I dismounted were whirled in rotting heaps to my feet—poor playthings of the tempest that bent the great elms on either side of the road. A gust of rain came with them. For the autumn had come early that year; November would not be in some seasons more advanced than October then. There was a roar in all the chimneys, a sound of cracking boughs from the pastures. And it was at such a time, in such a night as this, I had found the place which I had been seeking—sometimes idly, sometimes earnestly—through some of the best years of my life.

I had found it at last. And what avail now that I had done so? I walked in with a moody countenance, throwing scarce a look to the smirking landlord, the whole futility of the fancy that had drawn me thither staring me plainly in the face now that I had accomplished my whim.

An ancient place; but I had expected nothing less. Remote, yet on the high-road, its carved woodwork and jutting windows would have delighted some I knew to the heart; but I had not come hither as an antiquary, and cared little for its outside walls. Set openly and without shelter—it was in the very teeth of the gale that evening—it looked, to my impatient eyes, ready to fall into a crumbling heap and so end my quest; ay, and would do so some autumn night in the equinox. I could hear the hollow crash of its ruin echoing for a moment in one deeper note the wind that had been thrilling in its chimneys; and then, silence. Well, let it stand one night longer.

What had I come hither for? With tools secretly brought—the whole wild fancy seemed to stare me in the face and mock me—as if I had but to seek to find. I had given word briefly that I would make choice of a room later; at present the only thing desired was peace and quiet, and a meal of some kind—whatever the house could offer. It had come to this, that I was seated alone, with food before me, and with time in which to think, and all the thinking I was capable of led to no conclusion.

What had I come hither for? I did not know myself. It was all too vague; and if I had had a companion with me, and told him at that hour all there was to tell, he would have thought me a madman—as most men are accounted who spend their lives in search of buried treasure. My doings

looked like it. I owned it fairly to myself with a grim, contemptuous sense of honesty—but the contempt was for the world. I had not lived a more saintly life than other men, and this was perhaps a whim, but I knew it was not treasure I sought—it was the clearing of a dead man's honour.

And now, how was I nearer to doing so, having traced him to this place? I pieced it together coldly as I sat at food, a certain dullness and hopelessness having fallen on me since I set eyes upon my goal. I, Francis Prestyn, had traced the other Francis, of whose blood I was and by whose name I was called, to this ancient hostelry in hope of—what?

He had been bosom-friend of the exiled Charles—so hand and glove with him, beloved and surely trusted, that all men knew of the favour, and of the prince's signet-ring from his own finger placed on that of his friend's. I knew every particular so well that I could have given a description of the ring had it been needed. What letters had I not combed, what papers had I not sought for, since I had come to man's estate and been possessed by this overmastering fancy?

He had long mouldered in his grave. Why should I heed that men said he was a traitor?

I was called Francis Prestyn; I had lived a lonely life; I had so incorporated myself with the thought and with the soul of him that the stain on our name was mine—not mine only as Prestyn, but mine personally.

It ought to have been enough for men's ears that he lost name and land for Stuart loyalty; a man who would with eyes open do that was scarce likely to turn thief. Yet, later, when certain men banded together to send to Charles in France; when men who had given richly, and those who had little left, generously; when noble women threw jewels into the treasure-box that it might be taken oversea to the rightful king, for the rightful cause; when they all with one accord chose the king's friend for the perilous journey, entrusting him with treasure and message—he took flight, bearing both with him, and delivered neither. And men said—as men will say—he had been tempted.

Some said he went to Spain, bearing an assumed name; others that he fled over the high seas to a continent beyond, and lived a rich, unhappy man, and vanished out of life at last, leaving no trace—a traitor. Others of the family bore his name, and his shame as well; though there had not been wanting those who asserted that some mishap had befallen him on the journey

across Channel—that he had been followed, robbed of the treasure, and, with a proud man's impulse, had either gone into exile or made away with himself, not to look men in the face again. For myself, Francis Prestyn of a later day, I had never doubted the latter—till my fancy took possession of me.

Those were troublous times. Who knew but he might have apprehended some such following? Who knew that he might not have buried the treasure safely in some secret place, thinking to return after many days and find it? What more likely than that? I said to myself proudly when I came to man's estate and thought things out, and so set forth on this barren quest.

It had taken seven years to discover this last trace. Whether he fled at once or remained in England some days none seemed to know; the broad facts had seemed sufficient to all. Yet after all those years, in these later days, I had found it through an old letter preserved in another family than mine.

Sir Francis Prestyn had disappeared, it said among a hundred other items. He had lain one night in a hostelry on what had been once his own land, an inn that had formerly been kept by an old servant of his. And in the morning it was found that he had fled, wishing no man, evidently, to know the way he took—having plainly escaped by the window, for the door was fastened, and the outer doors also, and there had been no movement heard in the house.

I began to shape it into words at last in my own mind, and surely if my friends looked on me as a madman they were not without reason in their opinion: I hoped to find the buried treasure.

Not for its own sake. For the sake of my own long and sullenly-held belief; for the sake of proving that, as Francis Prestyn did not take the treasure with him, he at least never had the spending of it; for the sake of reinstating in his old place of honour the man I had become one in heart and soul with.

And now here was I, eating and drinking under the very roof that had covered him; and when I had but asked the landlord in what room Sir Francis Prestyn had lain, he had stared at me like an open-mouthed yokel. He had not had the place long, he said; he could not recall the name; yet it was an inn at which any gentleman—that the fellow was servilely sure of—might have made call.

Was there any legend of Francis Prestyn—long dead, I was at the pains to tell him curtly—connected with the place? No, there was none. And now he began to look on me with toleration—a foolish, learned fancier of forgotten days—a peerer into every corner for moss of years. He had evidently acquaintance

with the kind. They were not of the sort who rode away without payment, either; were rather, I saw scornfully, wont to linger out weeks in a place, scanning each tombstone. His civility increased.

I pushed my plate aside, heavy of heart. Yet I had no mind to leave. There were gaps at the door as I passed out into the hall and walked—idly, to all outward appearance, yet with the blood in my veins in a very fever of unrest and anger—round the ruinous place. It had drawn me from Flanders; it had been a very magnet for years; and now that I was here, what had there been to come for? Darkness settled on its walls; an owl hooted from its ivy.

Was there any room more than another in which my kinsman was like to have lain? I only knew that there was one that took my fancy. It was low down—so low that I could not make sure it was a bedroom—and so nested in ivy, some of the trails hanging thickly over the window as if it were a room disused, that it stirred some sleeping fancy in me before I set myself to work to find reason for the dwelling on it. And some slight show of reason there seemed to me. If Francis Prestyn had escaped in the night, he had achieved the task with greater ease from that window than from another—no need of ladder. The more I looked at it, the more some smouldering desire in my breast grew warm and increased. I would see what money could do—little as I was overburdened with the dross—though it were the landlord's very room.

He came to my beck sure enough—I bore his servility with less impatience this time, trusting it might aid me to my desire—and listened, all ears, till I had made known my request.

I saw his face fall. For himself, I was welcome to the room, he said, with a flourishing bow; any gentleman could have it who chose; but it was a room none desired. No, there was no legend; but it bore an evil repute. His women only cleaned it at stated times, and then in broad daylight, and there were never less than three persons who ventured into it together. It had been said for generations to be haunted; by whom, and in what fashion, there was none of his time could tell. For himself, he thought it an idle tale; he was glib in saying that, fearing I should dislike the place. There were other bedrooms and to spare at this season; I could take my choice of the best.

His eyes opened—he looked at me in extraordinary amazement—when I told him curtly I would have that room or none, fearing neither man nor spectre, I added grimly. I felt it, in the mood I was in. He began to look at me with that air of toleration again; truly, here was antiquarianism run rampant. Yet, if I chose to be so liberal, he said—for I had spoken plainly

on that head—and if I desired the room, he could find some one who would light a fire there, and aired bedding should be made ready by nightfall.

I did choose, I repeated. He thought me a man of wealth as well as fancy, and took my curt speech, born of self-impatience, as the natural manner of one accustomed to command.

'I would take a walk,' I said.

'In the tempest?' he submitted, with fresh amazement, open-mouthed, and with a commiserating eye. I flung back answer to him that I liked these north-country breezes.

Night was beginning to brood over the place, over this wild northern upland to which, it seemed to me now, I had been drawing nearer and nearer for years. And now that I had found it, a tempest held it in its grip, as if, scattering leaves, snapping branches, whirling down chimneys—for I had seen one fall—raging at the very foundations of the ruinous inn, it sought to find—as I did—and would wrest some secret—even as I would have done, by very force—ere it could be still.

It blew so fiercely in my face that I could scarce keep my footing, yet I went obstinately on, looking neither to the right nor to the left; and whether I was in the lonely high-road, or passed

through narrow lanes where the leaves lay ankle-deep—whether the path was uphill or down—it was all one to me at that hour. By what fortune I walked so long without losing my way I shall never know. Yet I found myself at last, conscious of no weariness, within sight of the inn.

The fierceness of the hurricane had rather increased than lessened. But lights were shining now from the windows of the ancient place, even from the room that had taken my fancy; the house looked more inviting than in the hour when I had first drawn rein. And yet the same weight, the same coldness in my breast fell upon me as I entered.

There was some bustle and stir within; maids passed, I could see, that they might gaze upon me. I knew that they accounted me whimsical, almost to impiety, since I ventured into a haunted room. Yet the women, I think, had some passing admiration of my courage—for so, in their country fashion, they deemed it—and if I had but paused to think, it was natural enough; yet I had nothing but a stirring of impatience, a cold scorn of this gaping wonder as I closed the door of my room.

For I closed it at last—and bolted it; the night had come.

THE BY-PRODUCTS OF THE BLAST-FURNACE.

DURING the last twenty years a silent revolution has been taking place in the Scotch iron industry that has given it a fresh lease of life, and enabled it to enter on a new era of prosperity which but few expected to see. This change has been brought about, not by any new or startling discovery whereby the make of metal could be increased or the cost reduced, but simply by the prosaic method of saving the rubbish, or, in other words, of collecting the by-products which had previously been allowed to go to waste.

One important point in which the blast-furnace practice of Scotland differs from that of other parts of the United Kingdom is the fuel used. In Scotland the coal is used as it comes from the mine, in the raw or uncoked condition; whilst in England it is always first converted into coke. This is not due to any preference for coal on the part of the Scotch ironmasters, for they know well enough that coke is the better fuel for the purpose; but it is due to the exigencies of the circumstances, and they, like other manufacturers, have to make the best of the materials which they have at hand. Coals suitable for making coke are comparatively rare in the Scottish coalfields; and to bring either the coal or coke from other districts,

whilst occasionally necessary for special purposes, would be far too expensive for general work. Fortunately, both Lanarkshire and Ayrshire abound in splint coals which, though not suitable for coke-making, can be used in the blast-furnace without coking; and though these are not so suitable as coke for blast-furnace use, and about thirty-six hundredweight of coal is required in place of one ton of coke, it is from them that the by-products to be described are derived; and in the light of the recently-gained experience it is not likely that the Scotch ironmasters would change their coal for coke even if they had the opportunity.

The method of making pig-iron in the blast-furnace is well known. The blast-furnace itself is a circular stack, fifty to a hundred feet in height, and twenty to thirty feet in diameter, something like a huge chimney. Into the top of this is charged the ore from which the iron is to be obtained, the fuel to supply the heat, and limestone as a flux; and from the bottom is tapped out the molten iron and slag. As the whole furnace is kept filled nearly to the top with the charge, there can be very little draught to keep the combustion going, and it is necessary to force in the air by means of blowing-engines. This is done through a series of openings near

the bottom of the furnace; and in modern practice the air is always strongly heated before it is sent in.

As the air comes in contact with the hot fuel combustion at once takes place, a very high temperature is produced, and the hot products of combustion pass away upwards, in their passage imparting their heat to the cold descending charge, and themselves being cooled, so that they leave the furnace at a comparatively low temperature (about 600° Fahr.).

The gases are combustible even when coke is the fuel used, because, owing to the very high temperature and the large excess of fuel, the carbon can only take up half the oxygen with which it can combine, and so is only half-burnt, the combustible carbon-monoxide being formed instead of the incombustible carbon-dioxide. When coal is the fuel used other combustible constituents are added to the escaping gas. The hot, ascending gases coming in contact with the coal near the top of the furnace distil out of it all the volatile matters—gas and tar—which mix with the gases and pass out of the furnace; and as this volatile portion is often nearly half the weight of the coal, the gases are thereby much enriched. The solid residue or coke which is left descends with the charge until it comes to the region where the air is blown in, and it is there burned. This fixed residue or coke is therefore the only portion of the coal which is usefully burned in the blast-furnace; and as it forms only fifty to sixty per cent. of the coal, it will be seen why so much more fuel is required when coal is used than when coke is provided.

In the early days of the Scotch iron industry the gases were allowed to escape into the air and burn at the top of the furnace with a lurid glare which illuminated the country for miles around, and made each blast-furnace a glowing beacon visible from afar; and though the value of the gases for heating purposes has long been known, and the first attempt was made to utilise them as far back as 1845, the adoption of such methods was very slow. It is only within the last ten years or so that the last open-topped furnace disappeared from Scotland, and in some English districts they still linger on. The top of the furnace is now closed by means of a valve which can be lowered to let in the charge, and from below which the gas is drawn off to the gas-mains to be distributed to the boilers and heating-stoves; and in most of the Scottish works all steam required for driving machinery is raised and heat for the air supplied by the combustion of this so-called waste gas.

When coal is distilled in retorts, as in the manufacture of coal-gas, many other products besides gas are given off, and the tar and ammonia are always recovered and utilised. When the coal is distilled at the top of the blast-furnace similar products must be produced; and if any ocular

demonstration were required, it was to be found in the abundance of tar which deposited in the gas-mains; but no attempts had been made to recover these. The cost would be very great, the profit to be made doubtful, and so the iron-masters held back, and year after year allowed the materials to go to waste, waiting for some one more far-seeing or more reckless than the rest to make the trial.

In 1880 the first plant for the recovery of by-products was erected so as to settle the question of the practicableness and profitableness of recovery on a large scale. The firm which undertook the work was Messrs Baird & Co., Limited, and the ironwork at which the plant was erected was that at Gartsherrie, famous in the history of the iron trade as being the first at which Neilson's invention of the hot-blast was put into use on a large scale. Many experiments and inquiries were made, and the plant erected was designed by Messrs Alexander & McCosh, by whose name it is now generally known. At the Gartsherrie works there were sixteen furnaces in blast, arranged in two rows, one on each side of the works, and the recovery plant was in the first instance fitted to one row of eight furnaces.

The recovery was beset with many and serious difficulties—as, indeed, what great advance in industry is not?—the principal one being the enormous amount of gas which had to be dealt with. In the gas-works a ton of coal yields about 10,000 cubic feet of coal-gas; but in the blast-furnace this would be mixed with the much larger volume of the products of combustion, amounting to about 110,000 cubic feet for each ton of coal consumed, so that the amount of gas to be dealt with was about 120,000 cubic feet for each ton of coal.

Each furnace produced about forty tons of pig iron in the twenty-four hours, consuming about thirty-two cwt. of coal for each ton of iron made, or about sixty-four tons of coal in the twenty-four hours, and about two hundred and fifty tons of air. The amount of gas, therefore, would be 7,680,000 cubic feet per day (twenty-four hours) from each furnace, or 61,440,000—say, in round numbers, 60,000,000—cubic feet per day from the eight furnaces. This enormous volume can hardly be grasped, but some idea can be formed of its practical meaning by comparing it with the quantity of coal-gas needed to supply a large town. The various gas-works in Glasgow which supply the city and surrounding districts, with a population of about 1,000,000, make 12,400,000 cubic feet of gas per day, which, as will be seen, is less than that produced by two blast-furnaces, and less than one-quarter of that which had to be dealt with by the new plant at the Gartsherrie works. Scattered through this vast amount of gas was the small amount of tar and ammonia which was to be recovered—about the same as would

be recovered from, say, 5,000,000 cubic feet of coal-gas.

Naturally, when the problem of designing the plant was set about, the engineers studied what was being done in the gas and other works, and they came to the conclusion that the only way of dealing with the gases was to adopt on a very large scale methods similar to those already in use—that is, to cool the gas very thoroughly, and then wash out the tar and ammonia by means of water. Time and experience has shown that this judgment was sound, for several forms of plant subsequently designed to deal with the gas on other principles have been unsuccessful, and have been abandoned. The plant required to deal with this large quantity of gas by cooling and condensation had to be of enormous size.

The gases passed from the furnace, at a temperature of about 600° Fahrenheit, into a large gas-main, by which they were conveyed to the cooling plant. As this tube was of considerable length, it to some extent acted as a cooler, and the gases entered the atmospheric condenser at a temperature of about 400° Fahrenheit.

The atmospheric condenser consists of 200 iron pipes, each 2 feet 6 inches in diameter, and 40 feet long, placed vertically, arranged in sets of ten, and united alternately above and below, so that every particle of gas has to travel through twenty tubes, altogether a distance of 800 feet. As these tubes are freely exposed to the air, they offer a very large cooling surface, and in hot weather they can be sprayed with water, and thus the gases are rapidly cooled; and leave the condenser at a temperature of about 120° Fahrenheit. The gases are thus cooled far below the boiling-point of water, and therefore it might be expected that the tar and water would be condensed and deposited. The deposit obtained in these tubes is, however, very small. No doubt the water and tar are condensed, but they are in such a fine state of division that they remain suspended in the gases in the form of mist, which needs a very long time to settle, and so they are carried forward by the onward current to the water cooler or condenser, which is placed next. The water condenser is a large iron chamber 45 feet high, 45 feet long, and 18 feet broad, divided into six chambers, connected alternately above and below, so that the gas must travel through them all, and they are crossed by 2700 iron tubes, 3½ inches in diameter, through which water is kept circulating. The result of this is that the gases are cooled to about 60° Fahrenheit, the ordinary atmospheric temperature, but deposit only a small further quantity of tar and water, the principal effect, therefore, having been to further cool the gases.

The gases next pass to the scrubber, where the final purification is effected. This is a huge iron tower 80 feet high and 25 feet square, which is

crossed by a large number of perforated shelves. As the gas ascends it is met by a descending shower of water delivered at the top in the form of a fine rain. The water is thus brought intimately into contact with the gas, and the tarry matters and ammonia are washed out of it whilst the gas passes onward.

As the various washers, &c., introduce considerable resistance, and thus hinder the flow of the gas, some form of suction must be used to draw it through and deliver it under suitable pressure to the boilers or stoves where it is to be burned. Many engineers thought that the washing would so reduce the heating power of the gas that it would cease to be available for the purposes for which it is required. This, however, has been found not to be the case. The removal of the tar must necessarily reduce the heating power somewhat; but this does not in any way interfere with its usefulness; and, though the gas has been washed with water, owing to its low temperature it carries much less water vapour with it than it would do if it passed direct from the blast-furnaces.

The tar and the water containing the ammonia in solution are run into tanks, where they separate into two layers, and whence they are removed for further treatment.

The amount of crude tar obtained is about 40 gallons for each ton of coal consumed, or 2480 gallons per furnace per day. This crude or green tar contains a large quantity of water, to remove which the tar is pumped into boilers and gently heated. The tar is very different from that obtained in the manufacture of coal-gas. It must be remembered that the tar does not exist as such in the coal, but is produced when the coal is broken up by destructive distillation, and the composition of the tar depends on the temperature at which the coal is distilled. In gas-making the coal is shovelled into very hot retorts, and is therefore distilled at a high temperature, whilst in the blast-furnace the distillation is brought about at a comparatively low temperature near the top of the furnace by the ascending current of hot gas. The blast-furnace tar, therefore, does not contain any of the substances which serve as the starting-point for the manufacture of the various coal-tar colours, which give the value to ordinary coal-tar, and the manufacturers when they had got the tar hardly knew what to do with it. Once a manufacturer has a large supply of a material, he will usually soon find some purpose to which it can be put, so it was not long before uses were found for the blast-furnace tar. It is now heated in closed retorts to a fairly high temperature, when it is broken up into oils which pass over any pitch which is left in the retorts.

The oils can be used for fuel or for burning in lamps of the Lucigen type, where the oil is sprayed by means of air or steam, though it is

too heavy for burning in ordinary wick-lamps. By suitable treatment it may be made to yield excellent disinfectants. The pitch which is separated from the oil is used in the manufacture of briquettes or fuel blocks.

The water which is condensed contains the ammonia. It is boiled, the vapour passed into sulphuric acid, and thus the ammonia is converted into sulphate of ammonia, which is of great commercial value, though the price is much lower to-day than it was when the first recovery plant was erected. The amount of sulphate of ammonia obtained is about twenty-three pounds for each ton of coal consumed—that is, considerably above half-a-ton per day from each furnace.

No sooner was Messrs Baird's plant in operation, and its success assured, than other ironmasters followed suit. Of course the designs were modified where modification was found to be advisable; but all that have succeeded followed exactly on the same lines—namely, cooling the gases by passing them through cooling tubes, and then washing them with water; and it speaks well for Messrs Alexander & McCosh that none of the more recently erected plants have given a better recovery than theirs, though some are a little cheaper to erect. The value of the recovery has now been demonstrated, and every ironwork in Scotland, with

one exception, has erected or is erecting plant for the recovery of the by-products from its blast furnace gases.

An estimate has recently been published of the results of the recovery process in an ironwork running four furnaces, which is as follows:

Coal consumed.....	2000 tons per week.
Pig-iron produced.....	1400 "
Pitch recovered.....	100 tons..... value £120
Oil recovered.....	20,000 gallons..... " 125
Sulphate of ammonia.....	20½ tons..... " 225
	£470

—the total cost of the process—being wages and cost of working £30, and cost of acid £20, 10s.—thus leaving a very handsome profit.

From these figures it will be seen what an important part the recovery of the by-products may play in the prosperity of the industry, and its introduction is second only in importance to that of the hot-blast by Neilson in 1828; and, if it has not saved the Scotch iron industry from extinction, it has introduced into the West of Scotland a new industry, which must add largely to the wealth and prosperity of the community.

BURMESE DOCTORS.

By E. D. CUMING.



HE wears a waistcloth which once may have been a large and cheerful tartan, but whose brilliancy is now subdued by honourable drug-stains; his hair is unkempt and wispy, and he needs a bamboo staff to aid footsteps tottering under the load of rare and curious knowledge which is reflected in the inscrutable gravity of his countenance. His gait is a happy blend of dignified deliberation and professional haste; and the people who draw aside to make way for him pause to offer the little obeisance due to Wisdom and Learning as personified in Sayah Hpo Khin.

When Moungh Thway, the timber merchant, awoke this morning he felt listless and out of sorts; and his wife, Mah Noo, being a nervous woman, sent for Doctor Hpo Khin, who lives in that little house under the great trees on the Kemendine Road. When the messenger said to Doctor Hpo Khin, 'My master, Moungh Thway, complains of sickness in his inside, and prays the very honourable and learned Sayah to come to his house,' he happened to rub his left ear. It is just possible that the gesture was due to the unwelcome attentions of a mosquito; but the trained perception of Doctor Hpo Khin recognised in it

a sure indication that there was nothing much amiss with Moungh Thway; therefore he made answer, 'Your good master invites me to earn Merit, and I will come.' Ten minutes before, a lad had approached his veranda, and with a profoundly respectful *shiko* had begged him to come and see his father, who felt sick. That lad, as he squatted blinking before the effulgence of wisdom, happened to scratch his right cheek; whereupon the doctor replied that, much to his regret, many and urgent calls upon his time prevented his coming to see the excellent parent of the meritorious youth before him. There are gestures which indicate that an illness will prove fatal. Scratching the right cheek is one; and as the doctor saw that he could do no good he declined to attend.

While the learned man is making his way to Moungh Thway's house we may look into his antecedents. Evincing as a lad more than ordinary interest in astrology and a weakness for hanging about the *pa-la-say*, or drug shop, his father apprenticed him to the famous Sayah Bah Toon, who had the best practice in Rangoon. Hpo Khin's parents had no objection in the world to their own son becoming a doctor; on the contrary, they were delighted that he should show pre-

ference for a profession which commands so much respect. The *hpoongjee*, or priest, of course stands first in the order of social esteem, then the government official, and after him the doctor. One reason for the respect accorded the medical practitioner lies in the fact that his occupation involves mental exertion, which is not popular among an indolent and amiable people. Another is that each time the doctor prescribes he does a good action and earns Merit—whereby a doctor with a large practice must accumulate so much Merit that the happiness of his future state is a matter of no concern to the most anxious. He also accumulates money, or would if he possessed the gift of saving, which, being a Burman, he does not. If he charged fees for his visits he would acquire no Merit at all, so he never asks for payment. To do so would be contrary to tradition and professional etiquette; but when the patient's relation lays an eight-anna bit before you, and says, 'Learned sir, I beg leave to honour you with this trifling gift,' you naturally take it; and when the patient's relations forget this ceremony—well, next time they send for you, you probably have an engagement elsewhere. The same course of action is open to you if the fee with which you are honoured falls short of the sum you deem worthy of your acceptance. Sayah Hpo Khin expects a rupee for each visit, including medicine; but, as he is a very kind-hearted man, he accepts whatever coin he knows a poor patient can afford. This is contrary to Sayah Bah Toon's method; he expected three rupees a visit, and nobody ever ventured to offer less after the day when he left lying on the floor the two rupees a patient's economical wife laid at his feet.

Hpo Khin did not pay any premium when he was apprenticed; he ran errands, boiled the rice, and made himself generally useful about the house, and in return was allowed to see his master compound fearful and wonderful mixtures, and also had access to his books. There is one standard work on medicine which every doctor must know thoroughly; it describes the symptoms of different diseases and the remedies; also it describes what are called the 'four elements'—the heart, gall, liver, and blood—of the human body. English doctors do not entertain a high opinion of this work. But how can they be entitled to form any at all when they have not given trial to any of the medicines mentioned therein? After a few years' apprenticeship, Hpo Khin was entrusted with an occasional 'case' by his busy master; and he achieved so much success that when the old man died, full of years and honour, he succeeded to his practice.

It must not be supposed that every Burmese doctor started in life with such advantages as did Sayah Hpo Khin. He was the son of respectable parents, and they insisted that he should be properly

trained for the profession. If you are in a hurry to begin, you may buy the necessary books—they are few and inexpensive—lay in a stock of herbs, and call yourself a doctor without more ado. Your future will depend on luck. A neighbour may call you in to prescribe when no other medical man happens to be within reach. If you, of your book-knowledge, treat the case successfully, have no fear then for the future; your career is assured. On the other hand, if the patient grows worse under your care it does not much matter, as you can put the blame on the malady, and nobody is any the wiser. If you adopt this plan of teaching first and learning afterwards, it is a good plan to accompany a medical friend on his rounds and pick up practical knowledge in that way. The dealer in drugs very usually blossoms forth as a doctor after a few years' experience in compounding. Through making up frequent prescriptions he gains information, and then has only to learn the diseases for which they are appropriate. If his experiments upon confiding neighbours turn out successfully, well and good; if they don't—so much the worse for the confiding neighbour.

Sayah Hpo Khin has arrived at Moung Thway's, and is received by that gentleman's wife, who squats respectfully to answer his questions, and then spreads a clean mat for him beside the patient.

'Let me see,' says the learned man; 'it's so long since I had the pleasure of attending you that I have forgotten the date and hour of your birth.'

Moung Thway, of course, can give this information off-hand; but he imparts it in a low tone, because there are several people about, and it is inadvisable to make public the moment of your birth lest evil-disposed persons should work spells against you. He was born when there was light enough to see the veins in the hand on the eighth day of the waxing of the moon of Taboung, year 1218; it was a Friday.

'Good,' says the Sayah; 'now I can make the necessary calculation. Where is my calendar?'

He draws the brown bunch of palm-leaf slips from his *pasoh*, and therefrom ascertains that the patient was born when the planet Mars was in the ascendant. Mars rules the liver, and to-day is the patient's name-day to boot. So Moung Thway's liver must be out of order. A few questions evoke answers which confirm the assumption; Sayah Hpo Khin then looks at his patient's tongue, feels his pulse, and repeats some Pali rhymes which he has learned from his book. He does not understand them himself, nor does Moung Thway; but the book says that these particular rhymes are beneficial for disordered liver, and that is enough for any reasonable man.

'I shall prepare the medicine for you this evening at a propitious hour,' says the Sayah, 'and bring it to-morrow.'

Having said this, he puts his palm-leaf calendar back in the fold of his *pasoh*, and, folding his hands over his knees, gazes out into the street with an air of deep abstraction. Mah Noo takes advantage of his absent-mindedness to get a rupee out of the box and lay it on the floor, muttering the usual apologetic request to be allowed to honour him thus. Sayah Hpo Khin awakes to mundane things, picks up his rupee without a word, and takes his departure.

Following the principles inculcated by his revered master, Doctor Hpo Khin 'feels his way' with a gentle remedy. If this answers, he continues it; if not, he tries another and another, and yet more, until he finds something that does produce results; or, what is more likely to happen first, Moung Thway sends a polite message to say that he is much obliged for the attention bestowed upon him, and intends to try another practitioner. Theoretically when a doctor finds a case beyond his skill it is his duty to say so and cease attendance, leaving the patient to call in another medico; but this is not often done, human nature being much the same all over the world. It is, however, very usual for a doctor to bring a colleague with him to consult in a difficult case.

Doctor Hpo Khin is regarded with a good deal of awe as well as veneration. He keeps a ghost about the house—not a partner who does work for which he takes credit, you understand, but the spirit of a person deceased which he has charmed from a new grave in the burying-ground, and which he entertains as a sort of watch-dog. Selecting a propitious hour on a suitable night, he went to the graveyard, taking a bit of magic wax and also a little boiled rice and some water, which he offered at the new grave to symbolise the hospitality he was prepared to offer the ghost of the occupant. The spirit, thinking no doubt that the doctor's premises, dark and redolent of mysterious drugs though they are, compared favourably with its present abode, accepted the offer, and, in return for some rice and water daily, protects his dwelling and all it contains from the prying of the curious. Hence the doctor can leave his house for the whole day without misgivings, for the boldest thief would not venture to place foot on the lowest step of the flight that leads up to his veranda. I have never met any one who has seen the doctor's ghost, but nearly everybody to whom I have addressed inquiries knows somebody who is well acquainted with Somebody Else who has. That Somebody Else has never been found, to my knowledge; and as his confession that he had seen the ghost would involve the assumption that the ghost had had reason to anticipate intentions on its patron's property, I do not think that Somebody Else is likely to be discovered by mere inquiry. From all I can gather, however, the doctor's ghost is

really a demon. There are awful whispers of huge, hairy, brown hands, each the size of a man's body, having been seen by Somebody Else; and it is very generally understood that any one who fell into those hands in the doctor's absence would be torn to pieces in a moment. The Sayah himself is reticent on the subject; he knows very well that the imagination of the wicked transcends a hundredfold his own descriptive power; and besides, it would not be etiquette to refer to a domesticated demon.

If Moung Thway finds that medicines do him no good, he will turn his back on Sayah Hpo Khin and the whole brotherhood of drug-doctors (*Baindaw sayahs*) and call in one of the fraternity who seek to achieve cures by an astrologically regulated system of diet—the *net khat sayah*, or 'asterism-doctor.' Western science has not yet discovered how potent is the influence of the stars upon the human body; but the laws of their operation have been systematised in the East for many centuries, and the diet-doctors in Burma do a large business. This practitioner's knowledge is of an order very different from that acquired by his brother-medico the druggist. The basis of his education is elementary astronomy; he knows—or ought to know—the twenty-seven asterisms, and is acquainted with the methods of calculating at any time the situation of each asterism in its relation to the moon. When he has mastered this branch of learning he devotes his attention to the matter of food. For medical purposes every article of food is classified in one of seven lists to correspond with the days of the week (Wednesday, sometimes reckoned as two days, being here counted as one). In practice, the day of the week on which the patient was born is the basis of operations, and the treatment is regulated by the influence of the stars upon these various classes of food, certain planets and asterisms 'governing' certain comestibles. It is to be noted that the date and hour of the patient's birth is the only personal factor taken into account by the diet-doctor; the nature of the disease is not considered at all. Broadly speaking, the principle is to change the regimen at the new and full moon. Thus, Moung Thway, now the moon is waxing, may be restricted (apart from his rice, which is never prohibited) to mangoes, bamboo shoots, and pumpkins; he will be fed on these until the moon reaches its full, when the dietary will be abruptly changed to perhaps dried fish, pine-apples, and vegetable curries. The methods of the asterism-doctor are considered extremely heroic, and this practitioner is only called in after a succession of druggists have made a series of unsuccessful experiments on the patient. The condition of the sick man, whose interior has been the sport of numerous weird and nauseous compounds, can hardly be encouraging to the diet-doctor, who is the last resort.

The Burmese say that 'dieting' either kills or cures; they are probably right. It is fair to say that cases of recovery are recorded; the Burman is often a man of iron constitution.

Neither the druggist nor the dietist has the most elementary knowledge of surgery; the only man I ever heard of among the Burmese who could set a broken limb was a priest who lived in Maulmain, and who died some seven or eight years ago. The Hpoongyee Boh was famed for his skill as a bone-setter all over the province, and his patients were legion; his *kyoung*, or monastery, was always surrounded by a crowd; and, had his vows permitted him to take money, he would have amassed a fortune, respectable measured even by European standards. The Buddhist priest, however, may not even touch money with his fingers (I have known an unregenerate vessel ask for a rupee, and take it carefully with the corner of his robe in order to comply with the letter of the law: but let that pass), and the Hpoongyee Boh reaped only a harvest of gifts in the shape of carpets, yellow silk robes, fine mats, pillows, and other goods, which he freely distributed among his brethren. He was a good priest as well as a capable bone-setter, and his name is held in undying respect throughout the country.

Although the Burman who has once learned the good effects of English medicine will travel many days' journey and grudge neither trouble nor money to procure it, he shrinks, if he happen to meet with an accident, from entrusting himself to the hands of an English surgeon. The reason for this is discoverable in the Burmese dislike for mutilated persons, and the consequent fear of the patient lest his injured arm or leg should be amputated. I have never discussed this curiously strong antipathy with a Burman, but think it may be due to the belief that misfortunes in this life are the result of evil-doing in a former existence; and the loss of a limb or an arm among slightly-clad people is necessarily a staring advertisement of the fruits of past misdeeds which do nothing to commend you to the regard of your friends in your present life.

The Burmese pharmacopœia as a whole is a subject for laughter and tears; but there is no gainsaying the fact that it includes a few medicines for such diseases as jungle-fever and dysentery which, if used by the light of common-sense and not by that of astrological calculation, are productive of excellent results. I have heard an English M.D. speak highly of one simple decoction prepared by a Burmese druggist for use in cases of dysentery. It was, if I remember rightly, made from the thick rind of the mangosteen, and my medical friend had found it sufficiently efficacious to recommend in his own practice. However deplorable may be the character of Burmese internal treatment, we find more than a little skill displayed in dealing with wounds, sores, and other external troubles. I recall a case

in which an English-speaking Burman, much above the average in intelligence and education, roused the ire of his employers by asking for a month's leave to be treated by a Maulmain doctor. The man was suffering from badly inflamed eyes, and the treatment given him for some two months as an out-patient at the Rangoon Hospital had produced no beneficial effect. He was offered leave to Calcutta that he might place himself in the competent hands of a specialist there, and earnestly advised not to trust his eyes to a 'native quack.' He was not to be moved, however, and eventually got his own way. In five weeks he was back at his desk, without his green shade and with his eyes completely cured. It is worth adding that he wore tinted glasses for six months by the advice of that Maulmain drug-doctor, who must have been a man of some breadth of mind as well as a clever herbalist. Much skill is often shown in the treatment of the obstinate boils and ulcers to which Europeans are naturally more liable than natives of the country. I have never known a pure European seek the advice of a Burmese druggist for such; but the half-caste does so frequently, and a wharf 'tally clerk' once told me he would go to nobody else when he suffered thus. It is due to him to say that his confidence was justified by results, even if the drug-doctor *did* begin the diagnosis by inquiring the date and hour of his birth. Maternal influence and nominal fees are no doubt the predisposing causes of the poor half-caste's preference for native advice in the first instance.

AUTUMN.

WITHERING leaves on the garden walk,
Russet and gold and red;
The roses dead on the trellised wall,
The flowers in the border dead.

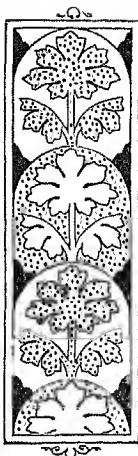
High to the western heaven the Beech,
One glory of crimson light;
Dying, too, as a hero dies
On a well-won field of fight.

Rich was his year, the awakening Prime,
The time of the bud, the flower,
The myriad lives in his lustrous leaves,
The song-bird and his bower.

Happy for all the spring-time gave,
And all from the summer won,
Awaiting the wintry death, he looks
Afair to the shining sun.

Thus would I, when my winter comes,
And all my summer is done,
Rejoice for the gladness of bygone days,
Rejoice for the glory of life, and gaze
Afair to the shining Sun.

T. P. JOHNSTON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

ROYALTIES I HAVE SEEN.

By T. H. S. ESCOTT, Author of *Personal Forces of the Period*, &c.

THE question whether he had ever met Prince Bismarck, once addressed by the present writer to the late Lord Granville, received from that statesman an answer suggestive of an interesting rather than an important scene in the Queen's private life abroad. Lord Granville seems only once to have met the Iron Chancellor of Germany; then only for a few minutes, and almost by accident. The erstwhile Foreign Secretary was in attendance on Her Majesty during one of her German visits, and waiting her appearance in a garden fringed by a dense shrubbery. To him entered the Prussian diplomatist, then, of course, known only as a rising official, and with all his great career before him. The conversation between the two was cut short by the English monosyllable 'Sharp!' ringing through the air. That, it seems, is the slang word indicating the approach of the royal lady. Herr von Bismarck heard the cry, knew its official significance—in Lord Granville's words describing the scene with humorous simplicity—'took one dive into the shrubbery as if into a lake, and so vanished from my view for ever.' Before that disappearance Bismarck had summed up to the British diplomatist his impressions of the Prince Consort's character in the words: 'The most remarkable combination of an entire absence of self-consciousness with personal dignity and intellectual power that I have ever seen among those born in the purple.' Prince Albert died while the present writer was finishing his first term at Oxford. One's earlier reminiscences of that particular royalty who did more than any other individual of his day to educate English taste, as well as to affect the whole ordering of English life, must be rather of an impersonal sort. They were, indeed, of the sort which might have been conveyed by the small cartoons and the underlying legends in *Punch*; they therefore belong to most Englishmen old enough to

recall the youth of the Prince of Wales. One heard much of the Prince Consort's punctilious insistence on all details of Court etiquette, be the occasion a levee at St James's, a visit to the opera, or an investiture of knighthood at Windsor. Most of the anecdotes, whose name was legion, illustrating this supposed attribute were probably apocryphal; they need not be revived, especially in a periodical published in the capital of the country where the real Prince Consort was perhaps better known than he ever became south of the Tweed.

The earliest, if not the only, recollection of the husband of the Queen now occurring to me illustrates so aptly one portion of the estimate of him formed by Bismarck, and tends to correct so many misconceptions, that it is worth giving here. The Prince Consort's services to Court economy and the better keeping up of the Court establishment are familiar to all who care to know them from Sir Theodore Martin's biography. Less, or rather nothing, has yet been written about the personal interest taken by the Prince Consort in reorganising the western heritage of his eldest son; in improving the collection of the revenues or the administration of the Stannaries Courts of the Duchy of Cornwall. While these improvements were being planned and carried out during the late fifties and the early sixties it was the lot of this writer to be passing his young days in the extreme west of England. Than his old friend, the late Henry Sewell Stokes, no one was a better judge of administrative ability or knew practically more of the working of the local judicature courts within the province giving a title to the Queen's eldest son. Even the official chronicle of the movements of the Prince Consort would be searched in vain for a record of the visits he paid to the west during several years, and especially about the time when the Prince of Wales was within sight of his majority. On these occasions the Queen's husband travelled with very

little state. He seemed often to have with him no one but a private secretary and a body-servant. During such a visit as this the Prince had made an excursion, certainly with only one of his suite, to the neighbourhood of Torquay. Within a few miles of that place is the ruined Abbey of Berry Pomeroy, actually in or very near to the rich pasture grounds watered by the prettiest of western streams, the river Dart. In the days now spoken of the whole of this region was dotted by small farms, the farmhouse itself being very often a mere cottage, and the farmer being a labourer as well. The production of the thick clotted cream called on one side of the Tamar, Devonshire, and on the other side Cornish, was and is among the native industries of these parts. The mode of preparation is the heating of the unskimmed milk in a broad and moderately deep pan over a wood fire on the hearth. The Prince Consort would seem to have watched, as he watched everything, this process in the farmhouses between Mount's Bay and Land's End, where his son's property chiefly lay. Strolling now near the abbey ruins just mentioned, the Prince passed a cottage farm, whose door was open, and on whose hearth was the clotted cream apparatus already named. It was in charge of a very small child, who could scarcely support the ladle with which she had presently to skim the contents of the very big pan. Visibly perplexed at the domestic task set her, the infant—for she was little more—was about to give it up in tears of despair, when she heard a kind voice, as of some one approaching her: 'Little girl, I understand all this, and I will help you.' It was the husband of the Queen, who had quietly entered, and who straightway began to show more practical knowledge of this hearthside business than had been displayed by another Anglo-Saxon royalty some centuries earlier, the King Alfred who did not properly tend in the Athelney cottage the baking of the historic cakes.

This aptitude for the practical mastering of the details of any business, great or small, public or private, amounting with the Prince Consort to genius, has notoriously descended from father to son. A single instance, under conditions very different from those just named, of the same sort of faculty as possessed and exercised by the Prince of Wales may be now given. During the earlier eighties, in the monthly periodical for which I was then responsible, Professor R. C. Jebb, to-day M.P. for Cambridge University, had advocated a scheme for the establishment of an English School of Hellenic Studies at Athens, such as the United States, France, and Germany had for some time possessed. If such an article were to lead to anything, it was necessary to have some sort of assurance of the practicability of the project. The minute and almost affectionate interest taken, for family reasons, by the Heir-apparent in all sorts of Hellenic enterprises seemed likely, if it could be

secured, to ensure the success of the scheme. The Prince of Wales was warmly predisposed in favour of the plan. 'Let me,' he said, 'ascertain what I should like to know of local feeling in Athens on the matter; we will then, if you please, call a meeting at Marlborough House.'

Obviously this was a subject out of the beaten track, diplomatic or international, and therefore not quite in the Prince's normal line. Within a week of the notion being first submitted to him he had read up the subject so thoroughly as to be able to pass an examination in it at the hands of an expert even such as Professor Jebb. The steps by which foreign schools of studies at Athens had been formed; whatever related to their revenues or their management; the disposition towards the enterprise of Oxford, Cambridge, and of the learned bodies or individuals of London—all these things were exhaustively mastered by the Prince entirely by methods he himself had devised for his enlightenment. Shortly afterwards the meeting which the Prince had called was held in that room of his house employed for such purposes. Having taken up the matter warmly, he had found means of communicating with all the most distinguished men whose names as proper to be invited had been submitted to him by Professor Jebb and myself. The result was that an actual and a potential Prime Minister, Mr Gladstone and Lord Salisbury, found themselves seated side by side. The Foreign Office in London was represented by Lord Granville, who then presided over it; and our diplomatic body by Lord Dufferin, then on furlough in England. The presence of that accomplished man was associated with an agreeably humorous incident in the proceedings. After the Prince of Wales, Mr Jebb, if I recollect rightly, Lord Reay, as the representative of cosmopolitan culture, and one of the house of Rothschild, which had subscribed liberally to the movement, had from different aspects exhausted the subject in the best of unpublished speeches I ever heard, there came a lull in the proceedings. Presently a sheet of foolscap paper was circulated among the company. On this it seemed to be expected, and as was supposed by royal order, that each of those present should sign his name. No one doubted that in doing so he was presenting his autograph to his future sovereign. A pleasant smile played upon the face of Lord Dufferin throughout this little episode. When the paper reached him, instead of writing his own name, having satisfied himself with the completeness of the list, he calmly put it into his pocket-book, then rose to say a few words on the possible advantages to diplomatic relations of that Athens school whose success was now assured. 'The fact is,' as he explained at the time to a friend, 'my daughter collects autographs. I really thought this was too good an opportunity to be lost.' His lordship had indeed made a most

brilliant bag; the Heir-apparent, having been let into the secret, completed the triumph of the diplomatist by adding the 'Albert Edward' to the imposing list.

No better instances than those here chosen need be given of the combined industry, versatility, tact, and varied knowledge of the eldest son of the Queen. He had of course, as princes always will have, every opportunity for mastering the facts; but most of those facts must have been new to him when he first took them in hand. He had not previously displayed any of those archaeological tastes which his brother the Duke of Albany had shown; nor had the Prince in his speeches merely reproduced the substance of Professor Jebbs's instructive and brilliant paper. The Prince's details about the work of other nations now to be emulated by England were not only most pertinent, but absolutely fresh and entirely his own. Some years before this the late Sir Philip Cunliffe Owen, who had worked with and under the Prince in every sort of way, had said to me: 'If His Royal Highness takes up any subject, no matter what it be, he will carry it through, doing the work as admirably as it can be done. You need tell him nothing; he knows where to go for every fact, figure, and person; if he wants anything, you will hear at just the right moment. But all this is conditional on one thing. The Prince of Wales likes a free hand, and to do things properly he must be allowed to do them in his own way. But when he has promised to see a thing through, you may with entire confidence leave it in his own hands, knowing that the way he chooses will certainly be the best.' No better commentary on the wise truth of the strenuous, tactful, and kindly man who said these words, and who so long and so well carried on the work of Sir Henry Cole at South Kensington, could be supplied than is given by the foregoing incident.

During the earliest childhood of this writer England was full of the praises of the splendid presence, the grand manner, the more than royal generosity of our future foe of Crimean days, the Czar Nicholas of Russia (Mr Gladstone and Mr Disraeli both in later years spoke of this prince as the handsomest man they had ever seen). Shortly before the great Exhibition of 1851 the memory of a visit he had paid to Windsor was fresh. The press and the public could not find praise warm enough for the beauty of the jewelled snuff-boxes and other gifts bestowed by him on every one who had come near him. The next occasion on which the imperial name was much mentioned in England arrived during the bitter winter of 1854-5; then it was that Tenniel's superb cartoon showed how 'General Février had turned traitor,' and in the death of the Emperor of All the Russias we in England saw an omen of the coming close of the Crimean war. On a bitter spring day, with nothing but the calendar to

remind one of the season, a successor of the Czar Nicholas was awaited by a sorely tried crowd of sightseers at Gravesend. The Queen's second son had just married (1874) the Grand Duchess Alexandrovna, whose imperial father was to escort her to her new home. Everything on that bleak, bitter March day seemed to go wrong. The steamer was late; the arrangements for landing were very imperfect; the Czar was invisible to all but a few. Those who saw him can never forget the handsome but pale and worn face, with a settled expression almost of unhappiness, relieved only by a pathetic and softening smile, as, while the sun for a moment peeped out from a cold gray cloud, the mighty potentate, stooping down, directed a fond fatherly glance at his daughter.

The old Emperor William of Germany must recall to many who read these lines the figure, stately in extreme old age, of which only the white head was visible to strollers on Unter den Linden at Berlin. One of his windows opened on the famous promenade. From it Prince Bismarck's great master was seen by me, as by hundreds of others, every afternoon during the early eighties. One reminiscence rather more definite and personal of the monarch may be given. He was announced to pay a visit to Baden-Baden while I happened to be staying there in 1879. Shortly before his arrival he must have accomplished a feat in a railway carriage which a 'change artist' at a music hall might have envied. Only a few minutes before the train actually stopped I had, at a point on the line, seen him in the costume of an old gentleman *en voyage*. When the station was reached the Kaiser stepped forth on the platform blazing in a magnificent and bejewelled uniform. A little later on the same day His Majesty, once more in unofficial costume, was inspecting on foot the pretty things in the shops of the Baden Kursaal, rather suggestive, as they are, of a section of the Paris Palais Royal. Two peasants from the neighbouring Black Forest, evidently a young man and his sweetheart, wistfully eyed some little object, timidly asked its price, and on hearing it almost tearfully turned away. The grand and kind old Kaiser had noted it all. The peasant pair had just reached the exit from the enclosure, when one of the people of the shop came up to them, placed a packet in their hands with some such words, murmured low, as, 'By the will of the Kaiser.'

Of foreign royalties my impression is most vivid of the deadly pale, still youngish man, with a marvellously waxed moustache, whom I sometimes saw when, as a child in short frocks, I stayed with a relative in John Street, Mayfair. Once more only was I to behold this man on whose lip Europe had meanwhile so long trembled. It was in the September of 1870, after Sedan, when Napoleon III. was an exile at Chislehurst. At the moment now referred to he was

driving down King Street, St James's, no doubt on his way to the Army and Navy Club, of which he was once again made free; in that King Street, at No. 13, he had lodged in his early English days. As he passed he looked up, and read the blue plaque outside commemorating the fact. 'I suppose,' said a voice from the deferential crowd which had silently recognised the fallen Cæsar, 'he is coming to engage rooms at his old lodgings.'

I often had occasion to approach in England the late Emperor of Brazil, the most early rising and polyglot of the earth's sovereigns. While the then master of the place was absent this imperial student had appointed to visit Chatsworth. He reached the palace of the Peak soon after dawn, before the household was up, before perhaps all its members had quite

settled to rest. The housekeeper, arriving on the scene, found a gentleman talking in a language she did not understand. Fortunately Sir James Lacaita, the great linguist and librarian, was in the house busy with the books. He quickly appeared, and addressed the visitor in French. The Emperor replied in Spanish, in which language Sir James continued. Italian was next employed; presently a particular *patois* of that tongue peculiar to a single district of Naples. It happened to be literally the mother-tongue of Sir James. Then came the inspection of the books. The distinguished cicerone still kept his identity dark. The Emperor assumed the savant to be the butler; he asked as he left the house: 'Do all the servants of the Duke of Devonshire have to pass an examination in languages before his Grace engages them?'

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER II.—A COMPACT.



HO was Miss Lily? Jim Solus (whose proper name was Gaverick) had given young Hulme a promise that, when they were in the bush, he would tell that love-smitten youth all he knew about the girl. As this was out of the question now, we will, whilst she is nursing Hulme through his illness, and old Jim is patiently prospecting in the distant scrub, relate as much of the girl's history as may be essential to this story.

Some two years previously there lived in a southern suburb of London, near the town of Croydon, a widow of less than forty, whose husband, a clergyman, had died a year before. She had only one child, a youth of nineteen, who was at a school in London preparing for a Civil Service examination. The widow's means consisted of the interest of a sum of six thousand pounds, which her husband had left for her in the hands of two trustees, whom he had known well and fully trusted. These were a solicitor, named Mr Mark Revel, and a private-school master, named Warner. They paid her four per cent. on the money, so that the widow was tolerably comfortable.

One morning, a few weeks before the examination was to come off, the son received at his school the following telegram: 'Come home at once. I want you.—MOTHER.'

The boy flew home to his mother, whom he adored as some sons do adore mothers. The old woman who acted as general servant in the little house, and who had been with her mistress since the latter's marriage, looked, the young fellow thought, very lugubrious as she opened the door for him.

'Is mother in, Betty?' he asked; and then, struck by her looks, added: 'Is mother ill?'

'Not very well, Master Dicky.'

He darted into the sitting-room. His mother lay on a couch, with her face hidden in a cushion. One smooth cheek, which alone was visible, was very white. She seemed asleep, or unconscious of her son's entrance, until he quietly knelt down beside her and kissed the white cheek. Then she moved her head and looked at him with lightless eyes.

'Oh Dicky!' she said, 'I did not expect you so soon.'

'I started at once, mother. You are ill? Have you had the doctor?'

'I am ill, my poor boy,' she replied tremulously, 'but the doctor could do nothing for me.'

Her delicate fingers played for some moments in his hair, and then she said, 'Dicky, we are left penniless.'

'Mother!'

'Read those letters for yourself, Dicky. I received them both this morning.'

The colour rose, a deep angry red, to the young fellow's forehead as he glanced over the letters. He read these, not as they affected himself, but his mother. They were from the trustees, each, unknown to the other, written on board the same ship, and sent ashore to be posted at the same place—Plymouth.

The first he read was from the schoolmaster:

S.S. 'RAVENNA,' March 10.

DEAR MRS HULME,—With great pain I inform you of a discovery I have just made, that my co-trustee, Mr Revel, has been speculating with your money, and has apparently lost the whole of it. I only received the news here in a letter delivered to me from Plymouth post-office. I

recently signed transfers for Revel with a view to transferring your fund to another security, and in this way he got command of the money. I need hardly add that I wholly trusted him, even as your poor husband did. I am on my way as far as Madeira for my health, and when I return I will do what I can to put things right. Meantime I have thought it right to inform the police, in case Revel should try to leave England.—With deep regret and kind regards, yours very sincerely,
DAVID WARNER.

This was the solicitor's letter, written the same day from the same ship:

DEAR MRS HULME,—I grieve to inform you that my co-trustee, Mr Warner, has absconded from England with your trust fund, which he appears to have realised 'by forging my name to a transfer. Having reason to believe that he has fled to South Africa, I have lost no time in starting in pursuit of him, in the hope that I may overtake and have him arrested before he has time to dissipate much of your little fortune. I will cable to you if I succeed.—With kindest wishes, yours faithfully,

MARK REVEL.

'The precious pair of scoundrels!' was all the comment the young fellow was able to make upon the foregoing epistles. Then he was silent for a while, until he perceived the deep suffering on his mother's face.

'Mother, mother dear,' he murmured, affectionately kissing her, and smoothing her soft hair with his hand, 'don't you trouble about the money. I think—Mr Perry is sure—I shall successfully pass the examination. After a while we shall be independent enough. Dear, dear mother! do not give way to this trouble.'

There was a dry sob in her throat. If she could have put her arm around her boy's neck and wept, it would have been well for her. But in truth her heart was broken. Delicate health had not left her enough physical strength to bear up against the blow. The shock killed her, for she was dead before evening. Heart disease it was called by the doctor. So it was.

Thus it came about that, at the age of nineteen, Dicky Hulme was left alone in the world. He passed his examination, it is true, urged to it by his teacher, but he had no heart for his work. He tired of it in a year or so, and emigrated.

Meanwhile the two worthies, so faithful to each other in rascality, arrived in Australia to speculate. They had most of the widow's money with them, fairly divided, and first tried their hand with mining shares in Melbourne. They found, however, that the 'Colonials' were pretty well able to take care of themselves in these speculative matters. From one place to another they moved, their funds growing less and less as they went, until at length they found themselves in Coolgardie, pretty hard-up for money, and on the lookout for any chance that offered of making more.

The girl called 'Miss Lily' by the miners was Warner's only child. He had taken her from school when leaving England, and kept her by him since. In the low water in which Warner

and Revel found themselves at Coolgardie, it was imperatively necessary to compass some means of existence until they discovered a chance of making money—honestly or otherwise. Lily Warner was a handsome girl, and was obliged to become a barmaid. She had no difficulty in obtaining a place. Barmaids, as before stated, were paid high salaries, and the miners put them up to all the good things they knew. The work was very hard, to be sure, but it was the results that had to be considered. Besides her earnings, Lily—disgusted, as she naturally was, with the whole business—was able from time to time to give her father 'tips,' of which he made good use.

Such was Miss Lily's history. After all, her salary and 'tips' were far from commensurate with the desires of her father and his partner. They had now been some months in Coolgardie, and had achieved little or nothing. Neither knew anything practical concerning goldfields, and although they went on one prospecting expedition, nothing came of it.

One hot afternoon, about a month after the departure of Jim Solus, when the smells of Coolgardie were specially aggressive, and the dust was so thick that to cross Bayley Street was like adventuring in a dense fog on an unknown sea, Warner and Revel sat drinking together in a remote corner of the bar. It was almost too hot for talking, and the pair sipped their drink mostly in languid silence.

At last Revel remarked, 'I don't see Lily in the bar. Where is she?'

'Lying down, probably,' was the lazy reply.

'No. She is up with her patient, I'll bet. Don't you think, Warner, she has done enough of that?'

'Nonsense, man. Let the girl alone. Whenever a man is sick some of these girls go to nurse him. Why shouldn't Lily, as well as another? If I were to interfere it wouldn't add to our already considerable popularity in Coolgardie.'

There was an acidity in the last remark which indicated the amount of solid truth it contained.

'It would come to this, Mark,' said Warner, pursuing the congenial subject, 'that some fine evening there would be a round-up, and we should be invited to depart.'

Revel's sullen look admitted the force of the argument, and he inquired, 'Who is the green-horn, anyway?'

'I'm sure I don't know. That young chap Jim Solus took a fancy to. Jim holds him dividing mate still.'

'Wonder if Jim's struck anything this time,' said Revel.

'Shouldn't be surprised if he did. He's gone into new ground, and Jim is not the man to do so without knowing what he is about.'

After this there was ten minutes' silence. They drank and smoked, and smoked and drank, and wiped their faces, and sighed with the heat.

'I'll tell you what, Warner,' said the younger man at last; 'we are doing no good loafing about here. Could we muster funds enough for a modest prospecting swag?'

'Why?'

'I would start and see what there is in that district Jim has gone to. If there is one good thing, you know there is every probability of another alongside of it. Hang it all, Warner! if we could get anything worth floating, we might clear out of this infernal place and face home-wards again. Wouldn't a good, greasy London fog be refreshing after all this sun?'

'But do you think it would be quite safe for us to go home—just yet?'

'Pooh, man! Who could molest us? She is dead, poor soul, and her son is gone to the ends of the earth somewhere.'

'Well, about this expedition. Are you really ready to go?'

'If I had the swag I would be off to-morrow.'

'I must see Lily about money. She can obtain an advance. Of course, it will be quite understood that we are partners?'

'That's always understood, Warner. We'll put it on paper if you like.'

'I think it would be better, in case we strike anything really good. Just share and share alike; the thing will be very simple.'

'Quite simple,' said Revel; then, throwing away a stump of cigar and lighting a fresh one, he added after a pause: 'There's one other thing, Warner, I should like to be satisfied about. If we are successful—something tells me we shall be—I don't know why—but if we are, I should like a clear understanding with you about Lily. I want her.'

'I offered her to you at Adelaide, you know, and you wouldn't have her.'

'True, Warner,' answered the other, with a grin. 'You wanted to relieve yourself of her as an inconvenient burden, and I was obliged to decline her for the same reason. Without disrespect to Lily, it's best to do plain speaking. But if fortune smiles upon us, and we are able to return to London, things will be different.'

'Very different,' assented Warner lazily. 'But you needn't have brought the subject up, Mark. You don't want the agreement about Lily put on paper too, do you?'

'Well, no,' said the other, 'as long as the thing is understood.'

'It is quite understood, Mark. Let us have another drink. Who is that chap leaning against the door?'

'That's the Bishop of Charnwood's son.'

'He's very drunk.'

'He must be, because he is talking to himself in Greek. And there's Viscount Halemount at yonder table, bargaining with that teamster for a horse and cart. Those two will be pretty drunk before their bargain is concluded.'

A few days later Mark Revel was equipped with the necessary 'swag' by means of an advance of wages obtained by Lily Warner. He started from Coolgardie in the early morning, none knowing his direction or destination except his partner, Warner. For some hours he pursued an easterly route, as though he were making for what is called 'Hannan's Field,' in the vicinity of Kalgoorlie. But he turned to the northward, and kept on his way through the bush until he calculated he was on a line with the mining camp of 'Twenty-five Mile.' Here, as it was near sunset, he halted for the night. Turning his small country horse loose, he lit a fire and put on the 'billy' to make tea, and with this and 'damper' he made his supper; and then, sitting with his back against a gum-tree, he smoked for the best part of an hour.

With the first dawn he was up and prepared breakfast. In less than an hour he was again in motion. Now he was going eastward, or rather in a north-easterly direction, following the half-obliterated mark of wheels which he had discovered half-an-hour after starting.

'Jim's route,' he mentally remarked. 'I wonder how far he went.'

About three in the afternoon he came upon one of those ghastly sights which the terrible bush sometimes affords. First he met a country pony, struggling through the scrub and cropping what it could, yoked to a broken cart. Farther on, a condenser—that rude machine on which the miner depends for purifying somewhat imperfectly the brackish water found here and there in granite hollows—lay broken by the path, along with other contents of the cart.

'I say, Jim,' soliloquised Revel, as he contemplated these things, 'if that broken condenser was yours I'm sorry for you!'

Proceeding a distance of less than a quarter of a mile, Revel came upon the unfortunate miner lying in the bush, naked. Men in the last extremities of thirst are commonly impelled, by some insane motive, to divest themselves of all their clothing. And this was Jim Solus. Regarding him for a minute with curiosity rather than compassion, Revel glanced around for the man's clothes. They were close by, and from a small leather wallet attached to a belt he took an old map.

This he examined attentively. The district was very accurately marked upon it, and Revel quickly fixed the spot he now occupied. About five miles to the north-east the map bore a cross in lead-pencil.

'Ah!' said Revel, 'he has found something there. I will hurry on and see. It looks to be all over with Jim.'

With another brief glance at the dead or dying miner—it mattered nothing to Mark Revel which it was—he hastened forward, and, hot as it was, covered the five miles in little over an hour.

Here an anxious search followed. The place was covered with bush. The surface soil seemed to be all sand. No sign of water, of course, was visible anywhere. But here and there Revel saw, protruding through the sand, an outcrop of yellow quartz. He tramped a quarter of a mile in a circle before he discovered what he was in search of.

A triumphant 'Ha!' broke from him as he came upon the well-known mark of two shallow trenches at right angles to each other. Following the direction of one of the arms of the angle, he found, some distance away, another similar pair of trenches. Then, in due course, he discovered the third and fourth angles of the square making the miner's 'claim,' and at the corner of the last a post was sunk in the ground, with a piece of paper nailed to it, containing in rough handwriting the following notification:

GOLDEN LILY CLAIM.

I, James Gaverick, of Coolgardie, have discovered and marked off this Claim, for which I intend forthwith to apply to the Warden for a Lease.

JAMES GAVERICK.

Dec. 10, 1895.

Without a moment's hesitation Revel tore a leaf from a pocket-book, and wrote a similar notification over his own name, merely altering the name from 'Golden Lily' to 'Revel's Find.' He tore poor Jim's paper from the post, and substituted his own. Then he made his arrangements to camp there for the night, after again examining the ground curiously, but vainly, for the indications of gold that made Jim mark the claim off.

It would hardly have done to go back to Coolgardie immediately. Revel had plenty of 'tucker' (as they call provisions), and had no need for hurry. He therefore spent a week in the bush, tramping about and examining the ground. But whatever in the way of gold the ground contained was a sealed book to him. He knew absolutely nothing of that elementary mineralogy which informs the ordinary miner's eye of the presence of the precious metal.

At the expiration of a week, having altered the date of his notification to the day of his departure, he started back to Coolgardie. Passing the spot where he had left the naked body of the poor miner, he was surprised to find no trace of it. The dingoes, he thought, or some other starving beasts, must have devoured it, even to the bones. Jim Solus was dead, or as good as dead, when

Revel saw him, and no man in that stage ever got up again and walked. That was the end of Jim Solus—as it had been the end of many a miner on these desert fields.

The old condenser Revel passed again, and some scattered fragments of the miner's 'swag.' Turning off the track east of Twenty-five Mile, he retraced his former course as nearly as he could guess, and at length found himself on the Kalgoolie trail. Late that night he reached Coolgardie, and greatly surprised Warner by walking in upon him.

'Back already! The same old luck, I suppose?'

'No; I've struck it this time, Warner—at least, I have marked off a promising claim, and we must apply for a lease at once. The thing is all luck.'

'I know it's luck. But ours has been so low that I thought it was never going to bob up again. See anything of Jim Solus?'

'No,' said Revel. 'I can't have hit the precise part of the country Jim is gone to. But I believe we have struck a good thing at last. Let me have something to eat and drink; I am hungry and fatigued.'

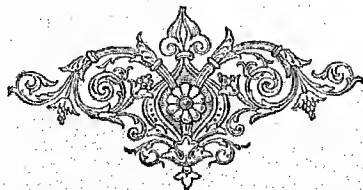
'The next question,' said Warner, 'will be to get money to keep the lease going until we can put it on the market. We must do it somehow, because if it is a good thing it would be ten thousand pities to sell it. Think what we can make out of it by floating a company in London! There's the mining engineers to report on it, too. We must think it over, Mark.'

'We can pay the engineers when we float the company—pay them with shares, I mean. I know two or three fellows who will do the job for us.'

'I wonder there's no news of Jim Solus.'

'Hang Jim Solus!' said Revel angrily. 'What have we got to do with him?'

The lease of the new mine, 'Revel's Find,' was obtained in due course, and the ground marked off by the government surveyor. Money was obtained by some means, and men put to work on the lease to comply with the labour regulations. Revel got the three 'experts' he had spoken of to sober up and go out to examine and report upon the mine. Their reports were most favourable; 'Revel's Find' was emphatically pronounced by these authorities to be one of the richest properties in the colony. The famous Greenhill Lode undoubtedly ran through it from north-east to south-west.



A STRANGE TONGUE.



JIM KEE, the cook on the ranch here on Vancouver Island, is a Chinaman, and naturally he speaks Chinese. We know he is speaking his own language when he hurls at other Chinese who may be working on the place a flood of linguistic brickbats. No master of hounds (in the old days) or begrimed bargee ever had such a vocabulary of hard, angular, knubbly, three-cornered words as ordinary Chinese words are. If he had, no repartee would have stood against them, and the 'cussee' (or person addressed) would have no alternative but to sink into the nearest available oblivion. But Jim Kee also speaks Pidgin-English. By the way, 'pidgin' is the nearest approach a Chinaman can get to 'business,' and ought not to be spelt, as it often is, 'pigeon.' Well, Jim uses his best Pidgin-English, highly spiced with American slang from over the border, while he addresses us; and if you give him the chance, he will enter into minute details of Chinese manners, customs, and history, all more or less unintelligible by reason of mixed metaphor and the intricacies of the language. One story he tells us is that the Chinese emperor is not a very good man—why we cannot make out—and that 'bimeby he [they] mak-um one other man king.' This, being tainted with conspiracy and all sorts of spicy ideas, interests us, and we ask when the coming overthrow of the monarch may be expected. 'Oh,' says Jim, 'in 'bout three hunderd year!' Affairs move slowly in China. But, in addition to Jim, we have our Indian neighbours, and often they come up from their reserve close by to buy apples or to sell fish. We can buy a ten-pound salmon from them for a shilling. Then the fun begins. Jim is the guardian of the apple-store, and he produces a small basketful of apples for a 'quarter' (quarter of a dollar). Sometimes the Indians are satisfied, sometimes they are not; and when they are not the fun begins. They speak to us in Chinook; they speak to each other in the dialect of their own tribe. Jim speaks English (his variety thereof), tries Chinook, and when excited, and the bargain is reaching its highest pitch, his feelings become too much for him, and he flies off into Chinese. Then the Indians quail, and take their apples and depart. Therefore there is babel on this coast, but it is nothing now to what it was when the first white men reached it.

In that vast district lying between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, from San Francisco Bay nearly up to Alaska, of which a large part was then generally known as Oregon—a term now applied to one of the states of America lying between California and Washington—dwelt many tribes of Indians, all of the same race, but speak-

ing no less than twelve absolutely distinct languages; and these languages were again divided up into dialects, many of them so different as to render the speakers of one quite unintelligible to their neighbours on the other side of a range of hills who spoke another. History relates that this ignorance of each other's tongue led to much fighting, and was frequently the cause of the fierce intertribal wars that were then almost continuously waging. The difficulty of the white man who arrived to 'trade' may be easily imagined. A sailor dealing with natives soon picks up a few of the simplest words, and rapidly makes progress; but his powers are sorely taxed when he sails out of the first river he strikes and into the next, thirty miles off, and finds that the natives there do not understand the words he picked up at his first point of arrival. This difficulty so hampered the early traders that a common language, a Volapük, was started. And this common lingo is now almost a complete language, and is spoken by natives all over that huge country which used to be known as Oregon, and is called the 'Chinook Jargon,' or 'Oregon Trade Language.'

This jargon was not made to order and 'taught in the schools,' but gradually grew up as necessities arose, until now at length it has arrived at the dignity of having a dictionary printed all to itself, and out of its precocity it has produced a framework which may some day arrive at the dignity of a grammar. The course of its growth is interesting.

Nootka Sound, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, was the haven to which most ships trading to this coast laid their courses, and here the jargon was cradled. And we find, as might be expected, that many of its most useful words are culled from the tribe that dwelt in that wild and wet district—such as *kloshe*, 'good'; *hyas* and *tenas*, 'large' and 'small'; *kumtaks*, 'to understand'; *mahkook*, 'to trade'; and *wawa*, 'to talk'—these being just the kind of words that would be wanted at first. By degrees other words—words that had a character of their own—from other tribes were added. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that the words added from time to time were such as could be pronounced by Europeans. The Indian languages are uncouth and unpronounceable to any one except, perhaps, a Welshman. The names of many articles of European make which came in the way of trade, and for which there could clearly be no native word, were adopted either whole or in such form as to fit the curves of a native mouth. 'Bed' and 'boat' were easy, but 'cold' becomes *cole*, 'dry' *dly*; and that very difficult word, 'handkerchief,' the gaudy red or yellow one so much prized by the dusky beauties, had to get itself understood as *hakatshum*, a name not altogether unlike that applied to the same article by Enro-

peans of tender age. The historical date of the origin of the language is shown by the word for 'Englishman,' *kintshantsh man*, which, being done into English, is 'King George-man,' and distinguishes us from our Yankee cousin, who, whether he hailed from north or south or east or west of his vast territory, is always known as a *Boston man*. Meanwhile another element crept in. Across the great prairies of Manitoba and the North-west, over the peaks and through the gorges of the Rockies, came the trapper of the Hudson Bay Company, the French-Canadian voyageur, a man accustomed to deal with Indians; and his individuality is strongly impressed into the jargon, which adopted his words with the article attached. Thus, under the letter L in the Chinook vocabulary we find that nearly all the words are French: *lassiet*, 'a plate;' *lashase*, 'chair;' *lemalito*, 'hammer;' *leplet* (*le prêtre*), 'priest,' *Calipeen*, 'a rille,' and *Siwash*, 'Indian,' are from the French *carabine* and *sauvage*. The imitation of sounds, almost an Indian's chief instinct, has produced a number of words—*tintin*, 'a bell;' *tikitik*, 'a watch;' and, most curious of all, *tumtum*, 'the heart' (not that part of the human anatomy subject to periodical pains during childhood, which it might be expected to mean). The word has also come to mean to think or to wish: *Nica tumtum chako hyu snass*—'It is my heart [I think] that a big rain is coming.' The origin of many of the words is unknown, and these were probably the result of some passing event; but many grew from very strange causes. *Pelton* means 'a fool,' and is also an adjective, 'foolish,' and it had its origin in this way: In the very early days there was a half-witted man named Pelton, who did very strange things, living at a settlement near the mouth of the Columbia River, and, as he was well known, any strange conduct on the part of any one came to be reported as 'All the same Pelton.' In spite of his lack of wit, Mr Pelton is probably the only one of that settlement whose name will be handed down to posterity. In 1804 an expedition under two well-known travellers, Messrs Lewis

and Clarke, visited the coast, and the salutation, 'Clarke, how are you?' is now the familiar *Clahoiya*?—'How do you do?'

From its earliest beginnings the jargon was found to be so useful that it spread and grew very rapidly. The Columbia River soon became a large centre of trade, and consequently we find many of the words, and also the name of the jargon itself, derived from the tribe of Chinook Indians who dwelt in that district.

In 1863 a dictionary of the jargon by Mr George Gibbs was published by the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, containing about 500 words, classified as follows: Chinook, 221; French, 94; English, 67; Salish, 39; Nootka, 24; the rest being obscure, unknown, or derived from imitation. It is a little strange that there is not one Russian word to be found.

As mentioned before, the jargon has practically no grammar, and should therefore highly commend itself to the schoolboy. Its nouns have no declension, its adjectives no gender, and its verbs no moods or declensions. At the same time custom is forming idioms, and out of idioms may come grammar. It may appear at first sight that it would be almost impossible to express any even slightly complicated thought in a language containing so few words. But it must be remembered that the method of talking amongst savage races is always highly figurative, and thus a few words may in various combinations mean many things. There is no word for the Deity, but *Saghalie Tyee*, 'the Chief on high,' is used instead. *Sitkum sun*, literally 'half day,' means 'twelve o'clock.' It may amuse speculative ethnologists to ponder over what may come of this rudiment of a language in the future. At present it is spoken continually over, say, two thousand miles of coast, and though it is a rudiment, it is growing. New words are creeping in, and fresh races are learning to speak it. Is it not true that out of a somewhat simular babel our beautiful and expressive English language has grown?

VINDICATION.

PART II.



AND now here, I said to myself, was the end of all; I had come to this at last, and my quest could go no farther. If Sir Francis Prestyn had not lain in this room, so easy of escape, there had been none other so well suited to his purpose. I looked round it, having the full courage of my conviction. Yet what was there to find?

It was a grim, oblong room, the oaken walls of it black with age; the shadows crowding in its corners so ghostly that I had a touch less of con-

tempt for those in the hostelry. It would be deemed by any country-folk a dismal place, even the fire and lights serving but to heighten its melancholy. There hung no picture of any sort on its walls; an ancient mirror on a table was framed in oak; and the room and the bed, with its heavy curtains, moth-eaten with age, bearing coldly upon it the look of a hearse, began to give me a creeping chill. Yet I could have sworn even then, to my very soul, I dreaded neither man nor spectre.

And now I took no further look at it, for what I had to do for the next few hours was to wait;

and what, indeed, I was to do after that had begun to resolve itself into a vague melancholy and despair. But I thought of one thing at a time, after the manner of men of my temperament; and knowing I was well provided with candles and fuel, and that they were all agog in the inn, and would be till some time past midnight—for at that hour they would account me visited by a spectre—I sat down to tire out their patience.

After years, what were a few extra hours? Yet the time went slowly. There were prying eyes about me, I knew, seeking each chink in the door, and I could have sworn that two or three listened with bated breath for every sound, though I had forewarned them I should not put the lights out. I caught the sound of their feet sometimes, picturing them to myself clutching each other's hands, starting at every sound, huddling together at every movement. But I did not hear even that at last, so taken up was I with the thought of Francis Prestyn.

The fire, once replenished, had begun to burn low again; but as the night wore on the wildness of the gale seemed rather to increase. It was a very hurricane, a wind fit for the tropics. The room was full of unimaginable noises as the wind swept through it, raving in the chimney as the clock neared midnight.

I remembered that the whole company of them would be outside my door; a faint voice, quickly stifled, of some woman came to my ears for a moment. Yet the knowledge that they were there scarcely touched me. For my thoughts were full of my kinsman—my soul seemed one with his—and I heard the clock strike twelve like one in a dream.

I saw him, in my mind's eye, in this room—where, I had now no doubt, he had lain—pacing the floor with restless feet, looking into the drowsy fire. I saw him in this solitary place on this wild night, sitting as I was doing, nursing his chin on one hand, looking into the glow with dreaming eyes.

How I came to be assured of it I know not, yet it seemed to me I was looking into his very soul, and knew it ardent and eager, full of a great hopefulness. He had the treasure safe—even here, in the room with him—and who knew what the future might bring forth? That by his help, and of his aid, the king might come to his own again? For it was but a matter of time now; a perilous journey borne, the riches given up to the rightful owner.

He was a man of comely looks—I knew it from the portrait—hawk-featured, and with a ruddy colour. It seemed as if I could look upon him, and see his eyes darken and burn. I read the thought that was in his mind; it was something to have lived for this hour.

An ember fell out of the grate and I wakened from my dream. It was long past midnight. And I was alone—at the end of my quest—in Francis Prestyn's room. And what I had looked upon,

almost with my waking eyes, was but dream and fancy.

I went to the door and listened. There was no footstep stirring. Those in the inn accounted me asleep at last, undisturbed by spectre or by the fear of one, even deeming me a man too learned, it might be, to have room for fancy. And now I went so far as to unbolt the door; but this room I had chosen being at a distance from the others, and the unwonted vigil having, no doubt, wearied each one of them, I did not hear so much as a breath that I could construe into nearness of human creature. The wind had made pause for a moment; I heard it rise again, gathering force for another blast that should crack the tree-tops, as I slid the bolt into its place.

I knew it to be nothing but the wind, that burst out again in all its fury as I turned, leaning my back against the door, rattling the hinges of it as if an enemy were outside, set upon capturing me. Yet as I looked something smote strangely on my heart—as if a hand had touched me there.

It was not the wind I was thinking of; and I knew that it was the fire, slowly dying, and the candles which had burned low, that filled the room with strange shadows. I heard the sound of the tempest outside, and knew that the noises I heard were but part of it. But it was beginning to be borne in upon me that there was some one in the room besides myself.

My eyes were fixed on one corner, and yet I saw nothing but long, flickering shadows. A weaker fancy might have construed a hundred of them into spectres, but I knew them for what they were. If something lurked in that sombre place, it was in the very blackness of it, close to the wall; there might even be a sliding panel—so it flashed through my brain in a second's space. I became suddenly aware, too, of the loneliness in which I stood in the house, a solitariness I had desired. There might be one behind, with intent to rob and murder, who had drawn the panel back for a moment and looked out; and, so doing, in some inexplicable way I had divined his presence.

I had not come unarmed. My hand went to my breast. I walked—carelessly, to all appearance—to the place where the taller candle burned, and then, lifting it above my head, with a sudden movement flung the light into the corner.

There was nothing to be seen. Oaken panelling, an empty space—dismal enough, ghostly too, to all seeming—black boards, black walls; but neither face nor form there.

Another thought sped to my brain like lightning. I took the candle into the place, setting it on a chair, and tried each panel for some distance on either side, pressing my fingers along the edges, searching everywhere for a secret spring. I must have spent full twenty minutes taking each one separately. There was no movement in any. The

knowledge of my womanishness, the conviction that I had fancied something in a space where there was nothing but bare boards, filled me, alone though I was, with a sense of shame. I had come hither to seek for that which it had been the dream of my life my kinsman had hidden, and I had wasted half-an-hour looking for an imagined murderer.

Yet there had been no waste of time. I remembered that when I had made up the fire and lighted another candle, and sitting down, with my back to the fireplace this time, let my gaze run over the room. I had come hither to search—to see if, on floor or wall, in hole or corner, was any sign of buried treasure.

I held the candle high, walking from corner to corner and looking closely at all—a partly-broken chest, shaped like a bureau, taking my fancy most. I saw that one drawer had the bottom of it broken away; another stuck fast, and took much time and patience; but I had them all out at last. And when the framework was so laid bare, I saw no room for any secret drawer—a hope having possessed me all the time that I might find some letter.

There was nothing there. I turned the framework of it over and over, my fingers growing black with dust. Even when I meant to leave it I went back again, the curious shape of it having taken my fancy—scrutinising each inch for marks wrought in the wood—for the old fever of search was beginning to rise in my veins.

I would look at it once more; after that the flooring, which last I had had more hope of before I came than of aught else in the room. I took up each drawer, and turned it over once again for sign of any scratch that I could interpret into a word, when, happening to glance once more towards that corner where I had first imagined some presence, the same possession fell on me.

It was all in shadow now. The candle was at some distance, but I remembered I had searched it before, and knew the folly of my own imagining, which now had grown so strong that I could only look towards the place with riveted eyes, and could have sworn, had I not found my fancy play me false before, that some one stood there. Without waiting for the candle this time, I found courage enough to walk straight to the place. I touched empty air.

But now I was too full of unrest, too passionate with a kind of despair which kept me constantly alert, to pause even for wonderment at my own folly, dismissing it with the thought that it was a strange thing. I had never known myself guilty of such imaginings before; nor would I let them tempt me to search the panels again, assured already that there was nothing there, for the wind might go down presently and every sound be heard. The hours were advancing and I had not yet searched the floor, the uneven boards of which had long been magnets to draw me.

I began to look at each, taking the light in my hand, kneeling down the better to do so, and beginning at one end of the room. My old fancies were at play, for in many places I found pieces loose and easily detached, and set to work—having tools with me of many kinds—to raise any that looked to my eyes as if they had once been moved. I spent much time on this, often waiting for a gust of wind to drown some sound, and taking board by board. I laid another back with a certain dogged and grim resolution I had found serviceable when I had had sword in hand. I was looking at every nail now, examining each mark; the wind was raging furiously, and I had grown less cautious of the sounds I made. And I was suddenly conscious, and now for the third time, of that strange contraction of the heart.

There was Something in the room. I could have taken oath of it this time, though I had my back that way—and in the same corner where I had searched at first.

And now, whether robber or murderer I could not say. That I was watched I had this time no shadow of a doubt, for the very soul of me was aware of it. And my blood ran cold with a sort of shiver I had never known—not even when Death had stared at me. I dashed forward so suddenly and fiercely that I thought it scarce possible he could regain his secret hiding-place. And yet, when I touched no one—when I flung the light there—when I stood in the very place where he had been, gazing about me, listening, all ears, I could hear nothing but the sound of the wind.

But now my blood had begun to burn—it had passed from frost to fire; and there was nothing else in the room to me, and I would wrest the secret of that corner if I lay in that house a month. I began to go over the panels again, pressing where I had done before, sliding my fingers along the edge of each, pressing even as I slid, that not one inch of the wood might escape me. It was of little moment to me in that mood that I had already tried all these. My fingers were upon the third panel when a sudden rush of blood went to my heart. Something moved.

My right hand went to my breast; my teeth clenched. With the left hand I pressed where the right one had been a moment ago. The panel was sliding.

I strained to pierce the darkness, listening for the first step forward of the murderer, the sound of his breathing. I gazed, fascinated, till the whole narrow doorway had rolled back, waiting for a step. None came. With my face to the place, I walked backward till I was able to take the candle in my hand. Then I advanced, still watching, till I stood at the very opening, and looked down a narrow flight of steps, woven over with cobwebs, thick with dust, that looked as if no foot had disturbed it for centuries.

AT A FRENCH BULL-FIGHT.



HERE is a common misquotation of a well-known text, that 'money is the root of all evil.' And if you mean by 'money' the removal of all necessity to work, the saying is really more true in its perverted than in its original form. For, at any rate, as applied to nations, the 'love of money,' necessitating constant labour and perpetually stimulating inventive skill, produces, on the whole, more good than bad effects. The Irish peasant, for instance, so long as he is contented with a fare of potatoes and butter-milk, shares his bedroom with the pig, haughtily refuses to earn sixpence by so degrading an act as carrying a bag for you, and is the finest material in the world for agitators to employ in houghing cattle or dragging men and women from their beds in the dead of night. But, once emigrated and started keenly in the competition of money-making, this self-same subject lives a blameless life and dies a mayor.

Glance down the countries of Europe, and the decrease in the scale of decency and humanity from north to south is both glaring and instructive. You will begin with the Norwegian, who exists in a country composed mainly of boulders, and you will find that he tells the truth, has a cheaper and better regulated system of telephones than any other nation, regulates his liquor-traffic on the Gothenburg system, and scarcely knows what murder is. You will end with the Sicilian or modern Greek, who spends such time as police supervision leaves entirely free in brigandage and cutting the throats of girls; or the Corsican, who regards it as his mission in life to shoot from behind a rock the sixteenth cousin of the man who accidentally killed his great-grandfather's cur dog.

If you would pursue your investigations still farther south, and anywhere outside a city wall, it may be well to do so from behind a bullet-proof cuirass, as you will be infallibly shot at sight if you happen alone on any considerable number of the inhabitants. From which it would appear that the more perfect the climate, the more productive the soil, the easier, in fact, that it is to live, the less you must expect to find of cleanliness, godliness, or humanity.

Of this conclusion the land of France, lying midway in the *descensus Averni*, offers at present a curious and interesting illustration. 'Judge me a nation by its play.' In the north they are trying hard, and more or less successfully, to introduce rowing, football, and other manly sports as occupations for their spare time. In the south there is a furious contention still going on as to whether they shall or shall not allow the naturalisation of the Spanish bull-fight.

In the month of August 1894, just before the first definite prohibition by the government of these disgusting spectacles, some of us happened to witness a typical one. And horrible as the details were, it may not be out of place to record them.

Ever since the prohibition the struggle has been going on in a desultory fashion between the government in Paris and the people in the south. The Minister of the Interior, if he happens to be what the southerners call *méchant*, launches fitfully from time to time fresh prohibitions. Sometimes the military is used to actually prevent a particular *corrida*. Then there is more or less of riot and uproar. The shareholders in the arena, annoyed at the loss they have suffered, coolly arrange and advertise another show. This time the military receives no orders. The show takes place. The local senator or deputy presides at it; the local judge attends and enjoys it. Next morning there is a legal inquiry; the bull-fighters are solemnly fined (the minimum legal amount) and banished (which means that they are given first-class tickets across the nearest frontier). Their banishment lasts just until they are wanted again. Thus, as a French gentleman explained to me, 'Tout ça s'arrange bien en famille, et on peut se fier pas mal de la loi.'

Now for what we saw, and how we came to see it.

Four of us were spending our summer holidays in the Pyrenees, and we had descended to the ancient town of Bayonne, once an English stronghold, and the scene, at the beginning of this century, of some of Wellington's most dashing exploits. A grand old town it is, with the arms of England still silently looking down at you from the cathedral's vaulted roof, with its massive and absolutely useless fortifications, and its splendid river, formed by the junction of the Nive and the Adour, rolling down to the sea at Biarritz. Every available bit of wall was placarded in gigantic letters, 'TOROS EN BAYONA;' and every one you spoke to said, 'Of course you are staying over Sunday for the show?' We did stay over Sunday; and, with the weakness of curiosity, we joined the swelling tide of some ten thousand human beings that poured through the pay-gates into the Amphitheatre.

This Amphitheatre, or *plaza*, is an enormous building on a hill a little way outside the city walls, erected a few years before by a company who had gauged only too well their countrymen's contamination from their Spanish neighbours. It is a cheap parody in brick and stucco of a Roman colosseum, a shoddy affair, daubed with a hideous drab, and penetrated with an evil, slaughterhouse reek of dead things lurking underneath the gloomy colonnades through

which you climb to your seat. These seats are not of marble; they are low benches made of painted deal, arranged in ascending tiers, for all the world like the gallery of an infants' school. The half of these seats which are exposed to the sun are let much cheaper than those which are in the shadow, and are proportionately more crowded. In fact, an hour before the show begins they are crammed with an excited audience, who sit there under huge umbrellas, gesticulating, shrieking, and whistling to distant friends, smoking cigarettes and spitting, supplying meanwhile the waste with constant goes of rough claret or lemonade, purveyed in a friendly way by struggling attendants, from a solitary tumbler.

All round the topmost tier are huge masts, gay with bunting; the tricolour of France, the red and yellow stripes of Spain, the Imperial Eagle of Russia all hobnob together. Somehow, we were not sorry to miss the Union-jack.

The time drags on, and the shaded seats begin to fill up. The president's box is the last to fill, but the great man (nearly always either a member or official of the government which has forbidden bull-fighting) enters it on the stroke of four, accompanied by the officers of the torpedo flotilla which is lying off one of the quays in the river. Tremendous enthusiasm greets their appearance, mixed with clamorous stampings and phrenetic cat-calls for the first victim.

The vast arena, freshly strewn with dry sand, glares in the hot sun. Suddenly two *alguazils*, or marshals, dressed all in black and mounted on really fine horses, dash into the ring to the strains of a small band of trumpets and kettledrums, seated opposite to the 'sixty *executants*.' The marshals make obeisance to the president, who is perched some fifty feet above them, and are understood to be asking permission to present the *cuadrilla*, or gang of bull-fighters. Behind them come six *alguazils* on foot, dressed in the costume of Philip IV.'s reign. Next in order come the two great heroes of the day, the *primas espadas*, whose proud prerogative it is to direct the torturing of each bull in turn, and administer the final death-blow with a sword-thrust. One is a man of forty-five, Cara-Ancha by name. He is bald and rather fat, and does not look remarkably agile. In fact, he is by no means the man you would select to turn loose into a high-walled field with an average Welsh bull if you valued his life or his clothing. The latter is magnificence itself. Dancing-pumps, white silk stockings, tight-fitting knee-breeches, and an Eton jacket of green silk, all heavily braided with gold lace; his long black hair is tied up in a Spanish net, and he crowns the whole with a rakish three-cornered hat. The other is Francisco Bonarillo, a smart young fellow of twenty-three. His dress is as gorgeous as his colleague's, and he steps along with the swagger of a volunteer captain. Both these men have worked their way

up to their present pinnacles of fame by arduous work as *sobresalientes*, or assistants, and continuous practice in the art of killing tethered cattle in the slaughterhouse with one scientific thrust. The programme informs us that Cara-Ancha 'received his baptism of blood' in 1865, and that he is quite a Tory in his art, for 'il conserve les passes de la haute école.' Bonarillo has won his laurels chiefly in South America, where 'son mode élégant et particulier de combattre et sa manière intrépide lui ont valu de chaleureux succès.'*

Next enter, in costumes scarcely less striking, the *picadores*, *chulos*, and *banderilleros*. The *picadores* are mounted on the sorriest steeds that ever called aloud for the merciful offices of the eat-meat merchant. The public facetiously call them 'herrings,' and regard the fact that their purchase-value is about one sovereign as crushing proof of their fitness for the horrible cruelties to be shortly practised upon them.

The *chulos* and *banderilleros* are not mounted. Their functions will be explained later.

The whole *cuadrilla* obsequiously bow the knee to the presidential box, and retire whilst the president flings down the key of the *toril*, or stable, gaily decorated with a bunch of ribbons, to the *alguazil*. The latter rides with it to the keeper of the door, and then, with a great show of haste and terror, gallops wildly out. The *picadores* and the gang on foot return and take up their places along the edge of the wooden barrier, some five feet in height, which surrounds the arena. Immediately behind this barrier, which is designed for the safety of a man hard pressed, runs a narrow passage, with several openings into the sand, and backed with a second barricade, considerably higher, and shutting off the spectators from all danger. The doors of the *toril* are flung wide open, and to a fanfare of trumpets the first bull dashes out. He is a magnificent black beast, in the pink of condition, and you feel inclined to admire at first the bold rush with which he enters, and the coquettish rosette of red and white ribbon, the *divisa* of the farm where he was reared, on his left shoulder. But your admiration receives a kind of chill, and a nasty feeling runs round underneath your waistcoat, when you learn that this rosette is threaded through the top of a steel skewer some five inches long. You cannot see the skewer—for the excellent reason that just as the animal emerged from his stall it was buried up to the top in his body—where it remains throughout the subsequent proceedings. These proceedings are regulated and arranged with the most minute and scrupulous adhesion to traditional etiquette. The *suerte*, or 'game,' as it is feelingly described, is divided into three parts:

* The public admiration for these *espadas* can hardly be exaggerated. One of them was killed some little time ago by a bull which proved one too many for him. Sixty thousand people followed his coffin to the tomb.

(1) teasing the bull with coloured cloaks, and jumping out of the way when he charges, combined with the 'game' with the 'piques' of the *picadores*; (2) sticking *banderillas* into the bull; (3) finally exasperating the animal with the *muleta*, or small scarlet cape, and killing him with the *estoque*, a long, rapier-like sword.

And that is what we saw enacted six times running that Sunday afternoon.

Arrived in the centre of the arena, Cortito (that was the bull's name) stood perfectly still; he was dazzled by the brilliant light and confused by the roar of the people, coming straight from his dark and silent stall. But the skewer is smarting in his shoulder, and when one of the *chulos* glides up to him from behind and trails his gaudy cape before his face, Cortito is after him like a shot. The *chulo* runs for the barricade, and before he is half-way there one of his fellows has diverted the animal with another cloak. This game, which in itself is really rather pretty, and demands considerable pluck and agility, only lasts a few minutes. The people have paid their money for blood, and blood is what they want. So the *chulos* attract the bull near to a *picador*.

The latter is sitting motionless on his poor old worn-out horse, with his *vara*, or lance, tightly gripped in his right hand against his right side. This lance is simply a very thick broomstick, ten feet long, with a short spike at the end, and a bunch of tow wrapped tightly round the wood just where the spike enters it. It is intended to push the bull away and hold him off. As soon as Cortito perceives the man on the horse he stops suddenly, paws the ground, and snorts with rage. The poor, patient horse stands still, too, his knees shaking with terror, despite the bandage over his right eye, which is there to prevent his seeing too much and getting out of the way. Suddenly Cortito charges with lowered head. The *picador* leans forward, sticks him with the *vara* just as his horns are almost touching the horse's ribs, presses downwards almost vertically, and shoves with all his weight and for all he is worth, edging his steed off to the left the while. The latter rears up in horrible fright and plunges desperately. Suddenly the bull presses forward; down goes the lance. See! it is through his hide now, spike, wadding, wood and all. Have you seen a schoolboy's pocket bulging out and revealing the bulky contents within? That is what the bull's side looks like as the wooden pole slides lower and lower, six inches, a foot, two feet between his skin and his bones. The furious struggle lasts for a minute or two. At last Cortito can stand it no longer; he wrenches himself free, wheels round, and makes for a *chulo* who is mocking him just behind. But his sharp horn has scored a point, and gashed the horse's chest. Up runs a *chulo*, and stuffs a handful of rags into the wound. It would never do to have

that bleeding unchecked. Some of the actors' fine clothes might be stained and ruined. And the worshipful public has not yet had half enough fun for the sovereign expended on that horse. The poor beast is dancing about with pain and fear, and almost at once Cortito comes at him again. The *picador* is late this time; Cortito gets both his horns into the animal's abdomen, works them savagely about, and then, with gigantic strength, lifts man and beast into the air and flings them heavily to the ground. In a moment half-a-dozen *chulos* are there distracting his attention, whilst others raise the fallen rider. The horse lies kicking wildly; three or four men beat him furiously on the boniest parts of his legs with heavy sticks, and he struggles up. Rags are no good this time. Surely they are going to put him out of his misery! Do you think so? If you do, you don't yet know the Spaniard and his ideas of sport. Look; they are hoisting the man into his saddle again. He is thickly padded, and has suffered no hurt whatever from his fall. His legs are protected with strips of steel, wrapped round and round with buffalo hide. He grips his *vara*, digs his spurs, with rowels as big as a crown-piece, into the poor brute's flanks, and makes him gallop round the ring to meet Cortito once more.

The spectators yell with delight, and leap wildly up on to their seats. Indignant shouts from those behind: 'Assis! Assis! nom de Dieu! Mais on ne peut rien voir!'

Again Cortito gets in under the *vara's* point; this time he buries his horns in the mangled brute's chest, and hurls him backwards. Ah! they may flog his wretched victim as much as they like now; he will never stand up again. Viciously the *chulos* wrench the big saddle and bridle off, and leave him there to bleed and writhe. Presently, with no kind of hurry, when the coast is clear, a butcher in red comes up and deals the *coup de grace* with the *puntilla*, or short dagger, which is stabbed into the spinal cord in the neck. A handful of sawdust is scattered over the wreckage, and there it remains till the end of the tragedy.

Another *picador* is ready, and the ghastly butchery is gone through once more. Cortito's glossy black hide is striped with a hideous broad band of smoking crimson from the gashes of the *vara*, and the *divisa* is white and red no longer. With splendid pluck he still shows fight. Panting and blind with rage, he tears to strips the cape which one of his tormentors has dropped—and dropped rather hastily. Look at those ladies—save the mark!—laughing till the tears roll down their cheeks because the poor brute has tripped and fallen in the blood-stained rags. See! he is up again, and wildly chases to the barrier a *chulo* who has left himself too near. Over the wood goes the man, and with a supreme effort

Cortito leaps clean after him. It is child's-play for the man, of course, to drop back into the arena, but the audience goes wild once more with delight. Those in front leap up again, and are as lustily cursed as ever by those behind.

This is the 'triumph of mind over matter' which Théophile Gautier has given as his reason for revelling in bull-fights; a noble triumph, in sooth! such as can be rivalled, perhaps, in the annals of King Theebaw or the pulleys of Constantinople.

Now is the time for the spectators in the front row to exhibit their lion-hearted courage. From their impregnable retreat they crane forward, and boldly stab and flog Cortito with their sticks till he is forced back into the sand.

His drooping head and desperate, appealing gaze round the sea of faces would touch the heart of a fiend. At least one would have thought so an hour ago. For the minute he has realised that he is fighting a hopeless battle, and, careless of the flaunted mantles, he wanders wearily in search of the stable whence he came. His appeal is quickly answered. The trumpets sound a fanfare, and Act II. begins. A man is standing in the centre; the *chulos* vault the barricade and leave him there. Cortito is tired out, and does not see the man at once; he still walks slowly round the edge, stopping, with pitiable ignorance and vain displays of noble strength, to trample and gore the horses' carcasses. The man advances a yard or two. In his hands he has two *banderillas*. These are sticks a yard in length, *enjolivées*, as they say, with spiral frills of pink and white paper. At the end is a small harpoon-head, a sharp steel blade with a deeply barbed point. In a flash, Cortito sees him, and advances at a run. The *banderillero* awaits him, pluckily enough, and, at the moment when he charges, thrusts one of his infernal weapons into each shoulder, leaps aside, and bolts for safety. Stung to fresh madness, Cortito shakes the *banderillas* savagely; one dangles and beats his side, the other flies out high into the air. Another and another pair are fixed into him, with more or less adroitness. Being a high-mettled beast, he is spared one—and one only—fiendish refinement of cruelty. Had he refused to charge, the *banderillas* would have contained lighted squibs, which, after fizzing for a minute, would have exploded with a sharp and terrorising detonation.

Again the trumpets sound; this time it is with his death-warrant. Weakened and exhausted, the poor brute stands there in the burning sun, with roping nostrils, lashing his bleeding sides with his tail, and feebly pawing the burning dust. This is the moment for the *espada*. Daintily he approaches, with his sword hidden under the scarlet *muleta*. Five minutes more of teasing him ensue; a dozen futile charges at the aggravating cloth, and at last Cara-Ancha plunges the rapier up to the hilt between his shoulder-blades.

A convulsive shudder hurls the blade far away, and Cortito staggers to the edge. Cara-Ancha regains his *estoque* and follows him. No haste, no flutter; with sparkling, ferret eyes the Spaniards watch him as he comes to close quarters once more. This time the thrust is truer. Down sinks Cortito on his knees; his magnificent head trembles dizzily from side to side. Slowly, slowly he leans, rolls over, and, with a piteous groan, expires.

An uproar of enthusiastic applause surges round the amphitheatre from all the degenerate mongrels there, in whose veins the brutal instincts of the Roman Empire and the savages it conquered are tempered to-day with nothing better than their own unutterably foul tobacco and absinthe. With childish, idiotic excitement, they fling down into the arena top-hats and billycocks, overcoats, halfpence, and packets of cigarettes. The *espada* walks round, smiling and bowing. The princely gifts of coppers and tobacco he retains, the articles of apparel he courteously and laboriously returns to their expectant owners; they merely wish to have them touched by the heroic artist in silk breeches and patent pumps. Meanwhile two teams of mules, gaily decked with red and yellow braid, and jingling with innumerable bells, are flogged at full speed into the ring and yoked to the dead animals. These they drag round for the human vultures to feast their eyes upon, and then disappear, leaving a horrible red track in their wake.

Have you had enough of this?

I know four of the spectators had more than enough. They sat there, sick and trembling with disgust, and, as leaving the place was impossible, they sat there miserably till the end. One feeling, passionate if not good, was uppermost, and that was a longing that the bull should kill one or more of his torturers, and so break up the show. Once this desire was mightily near being satisfied, for Surlito, a large and powerful animal, succeeded in knocking Cara-Ancha down and ripping his fine clothes open. But their chief was instantly extricated from his danger by the rest of the gang, and Surlito was done to death like the others. Perhaps the enthusiasm was a little wilder as they dragged him out, but that was all.

The sixth and last animal was Cabezon, who dashed into the ring with such resentful rage that he broke one horn clean off against the barricade. Instantly the whole ten thousand of the audience burst into loud cries, addressed to the president, and ten thousand handkerchiefs, some of which were white, waved wildly in the air. One thought at first they were demanding mercy for the maimed and almost defenceless beast. Mercy? From a Spanish rabble? Nothing of the sort. Simply, they wanted another bull, the *taureau de reserve*, after Cabezon should have been despatched. To his credit, the president regarded

their clamouring with silent disdain. I think he and the naval officers had had all they wanted, too. So the audience saw it out, and revenged themselves by waiting afterwards and hissing him at the exit. When it was over, and the last of the slaughtered horses (there were a dozen of them, *étripes*—delightful word—in all) had been dragged out, we escaped with the mob.

To say that we felt ashamed of having been there is to mildly understate the fact. If you want to feel the sting of low-down, crawling 'caddishness,' as schoolboys say, go to a bull-fight; and Heaven grant you may have to go to Spain for it. We were in Spain a few days later, at Fuenterrabia, a pretty little town on the border. The place was *en fête* for four days in honour of the patron saint. The mornings were divided by the natives between long services in the cathedral and letting off rockets in the streets; the afternoons were entirely devoted to bull-fights, four bulls being generously provided each day. Somehow we did not go. In the market-place were a group of tiny children playing the only game they knew. That was a mimic bull-fight. Every stage was faithfully reproduced. Only a few small boys and girls were not taking part in the game. They had managed to capture a live sparrow, and were enjoying the more fascinating pleasure of twisting off its legs and wings. I should think the patron saint must have felt both pleased and flattered by the spectacle. And then we came home to England and read solemn letters in the English newspapers, arguing that bull-fights are excellent sport, and not one whit more cruel than fox-hunting. If you think so, then by all means avoid fox-hunting. But do you think so? If you feel unable to decide, just go and see with your eyes the abominations I have endeavoured to describe. You will see nothing less cruel; there are even some things that an English pen cannot tackle, which I have been forced to omit.

Last January a party of us were visiting the splendid ruins of the Arènes at Nîmes. We tried to fancy ourselves ancient Romans as we walked up to the Amphitheatre stairs, about to witness a great lion-feed, with Christians for the main dish. It was not easy to call up much enthusiasm for such a show. Then we peered into the dank, gloomy prisons under the rows of seats, and tried to fancy the uncomfortable position of the Christians when the time came for the 'doors to open.' This was much easier.

The ruined tiers of masonry and the central space are now used regularly, during the season, for bull-fights. I wonder which of these uses will be considered in time to come the most thoroughly disgraceful of the two—the slaughter of the Christians or the torture of the animals? The Christian victims were at least offered their choice between a cruel death and conformity to the national creed by sacrificing to the emperor

or to some other quaint deity. The dumb animals are not even offered a chance of a speedy death.

The junior member of the party was rather smarter than he meant to be when he remarked, with a sigh, 'Ah, well! I suppose there will never be any more lions *nor any more Christians* here again!'

Who knows? The time has already come when America has said to Spain, 'You shall not on any pretext whatever continue to torture human beings. Your lack of conscience is a disgrace to humanity, and we mean to make you better.'

This is a great jump in the progress of the moral sense of nations. The day may yet come for a greater, when the power of the Old World will care and dare to say, 'No European nation shall any longer encourage or countenance purposeless and degrading cruelty, even to animals.'

If Spain is paying in her present sorry plight the penalty bequeathed her by the Inquisition of an ingrained tendency to cruelty, the sooner the cancer is cut out down to the roots the better for her.

For France, at least, no pressure from without should be needed to make her purge herself of this blot upon her civilisation. The ridicule, if nothing else, which she deserves will some day suffice to rouse her to coerce her defiant minority into submission to the national conscience. Spain is the real stronghold of bull-fighting; and if it were stopped there, shame would give ridicule a lift in its task across the Pyrenees.

But Spain, with her loud talk of honour and her real sense of pride, has now been taken in hand like a vicious child. The whipping universally prescribed for such children has even now been administered.

The moral lesson which has necessitated it may surely with advantage and economy be made as wide as possible.

ON A MINIATURE OF A LADY.

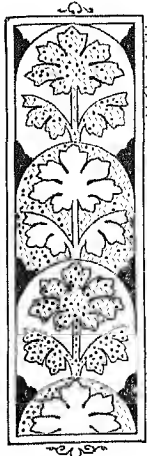
A RONDEAU.

HER lovely face within a frame
Of golden hair is set. Her name?
I know not, neither do I care.
I only know that she is fair,
This much-bepatched and powdered dame.

Her laughing eyes are all aflame:
It must have been the artist's aim
To make, forsooth! beyond compare
Her lovely face.

Although she is unknown to fame,
Yet I can fancy, all the same,
She could command with charming air
The beaux who thronged her Sedan-chair,
All eager for their own to claim
Her lovely face.

SISSIE HUNTER.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

BALNACRAIG.

ON the south side of a hill in the north of Scotland stands an old house, from which you look across to the forest of Birse and away to the great hills and braes of Mar, while green pastures and corn-fields stretch down to the broad valley of the Dee; and immediately behind the house rises a rocky crest clothed with Scotch firs and ash-trees of great age and size.

On this October afternoon, when the low sun and softly dappled sky bespeak an autumn day, there is something pensive in the look of the old house, standing apart in the shelter of the hillside, with the old trees casting their shadows on the roof and walls, and with the unmistakable look of having seen better days; and yet there are few fairer scenes than that which to-day lies before the old house of Balnacraig. The far hills in Braemar are veiled in sunny mist; the nearer flowing lines of the hills of Birse are broken by the dark-blue masses of fir woods; and below, the gleaming river lies like a silver ribbon, with a ceaseless murmur rising into the still air, like a low strain of solemn music.

There is nothing of autumn sadness to be seen or felt to-day, however, for everything seems steeped in sunshine. Last Sunday was 'stookie Sabbath,' and all the land is fair with golden grain; there are cheerful sounds of voices and signs of rejoicing labour everywhere, for harvesting is going on, and in the fields below men and strong-armed women in sun-bonnets and white 'wrappers' are 'leading' and 'getting up' the corn. In the stackyard a loaded cart comes rattling over the stony road, with a clatter of horses' hoofs and the rustle of ripe sheaves.

A herd of cows stand patiently at the gate, and a couple of collie puppies with their sedate-looking mother greet the stranger with smiling, innocent faces and wagging tails, ignorant as yet of refractory cattle and bewildered sheep. Farther away, in a little croft in the woods, a solitary girl is reaping and singing to herself, reminding one of Wordsworth's 'Sweet Highland Girl'; and down

below, nearer the river, there is a still more animated scene, for a threshing-machine has taken its stand in a full stackyard, and men and women are hard at work filling its capacious mouth with rustling sheaves as fast as they can lift them. Forks and rakes ply busily, aprons flutter in the wind, and now a great tub of water is being fast borne by two men from the spout in the rocky hillside, for the great panting machine is a thirsty creature, and needs a plentiful supply; and over and through it all rises the busy humming heard far and near in the still autumn air, and never ceasing for a moment. It is a scene of cheerful rural labour, pleasant to the eye and ear; for, notwithstanding its modern appliances and associations, a threshing-machine in a full stackyard, with its busy assistants and cheerful humming, is as picturesque and charming a sight as one can see on such a day as this, with surroundings such as these.

All this speaks of to-day, of its peaceful life and simple labour; and in the midst of it, but a little apart, stands the old house, in strong contrast, with a certain look of melancholy, and in every part seeming to belong to the times of long ago and another order of things. It has, however, no especial dignity of size or of architecture to recommend it to notice, and there seems little that savours of romance about it; a date over the door shows that it was built little more than a hundred and sixty years ago, and the initials below the date were no doubt the initials of the married pair who built and first inhabited the house. There is no sign of any earlier building; no remains of tower or keep, such as mark the age of so many Scotch houses of an earlier date. This was simply the house of a Scottish gentleman of good family, and probably of very moderate fortune—a member of the Jacobite family of Innes; and it would have no special interest but that it is so little changed since the days when Scotland was in the midst of her 'trouble,' and when the habits and domestic lives of families in the like condition must have been more or less affected by it.

In 1735, about the time when the house of Balnacraig was built, the 'trouble' had lasted for over a hundred years, and at that time there seemed little prospect of quiet in the near future. Twenty years before, the standard of King James had been raised in Braemar, less than thirty miles away, and Balnacraig had been built but ten years when the fortunes of the young Chevalier were put to the test and lost at Culloden; and as the Inneses were zealous Jacobites and Roman Catholics, every member of the family must have held himself ready for defence.

Very soon after Culloden the house had a narrow escape of being burnt to the ground. It remained, however, in the family for many years; and then, passing away to strangers, it became a farmhouse, as it remains to-day.

Many members of the proscribed family sought a home or became wanderers in other lands, and some became, like many other members of Scottish families, remarkable abroad for qualities which had no scope at home.

We hear of a daughter of the house who for many years was abbess of the community at Haggerston; several of the sons became priests, notably one who held for many years an important position in the Scots College in Paris, and who was probably a man of taste and culture, as he brought to the Roman Catholic College of Blairs, near Aberdeen, the fine portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, known as one of the most valuable now existing.

This Henry Innes was remarkable in various ways; he was intimate with the family and adherents of the exiled Stuarts, and was in Paris sharing the dangers and vicissitudes of the clergy during the French Revolution of 1793.

He lived to return, however, and to end his days at Balnacraig, which had then become the dower-house of the family; the lands, together with the larger property adjoining, having passed into the possession of a member of the Farquharsons of Inverey, who took the name of Innes.

There are still living those who remember the last Inneses who lived at Balnacraig. The house even in those days of its altered fortunes showed that the inhabitants had been people of cultivated tastes and education. The rooms, though small and low, were full of French inlaid cabinets, books, and pictures. Above all, in the house there were many touching relics, held sacred not for their intrinsic value, but treasured as all that remained of a lost cause, and as witnesses of the ardent affection and loyalty inspired by a royal race in almost unprecedented misfortune; and as such, even in these days, so far removed from such ideas and passionate feeling, the sight of a worn pocket-book containing a miniature, a lock of hair, or even a faded flower, will make the 'tears rise in the heart,' though the cause has sunk into oblivion or remains only a theme for romance.

There are no such relics now in the house—only a rusty bell hanging in the quaint belfry,

and the small arched windows of what once was the chapel tell of the days when mass was celebrated there. In the kitchen there is an old meal-girnel, which might be of any age, and a mighty iron pot hangs on the 'swee,' as those primitive contrivances are called which Scotch housewives still use for their cooking.

To the right and left are the old gardens and what might once have been a 'pleasance,' which are dignified by entrance-gates and stone piers with balls on the top, and these are continued round the enclosure at intervals. The garden, with sundial and turf walks, and walls on which grew, it is said, long ago, fine fruit—French apples and pears—mixed with a rambling growth of old-fashioned flowers; and the ample size of the whole seems to show that the owners, when they built their house a century and a half ago, thought something of the pleasures and refinements of life besides its mere necessities.

There is a curious hiding-place in the hill behind the house, hidden among the rocks and roots of trees, which might be taken for a fox's earth, but which leads to a subterranean passage going far into the hill, and ending in one of those curious underground circular chambers, built of rough stones, supposed to be Picts' houses; but in the days of the Inneses of Balnacraig this is more likely to have been made as a hiding-place for valuables, money, and plate, and perhaps dangerous papers, when a sudden surprise might have involved the loss of all they possessed. At any rate, some years ago a fine inlaid standing clock was found there, of French workmanship; and it stands in the house of the present owner of Balnacraig, three miles away, ticking away the time now, with its 'never—for ever' voice of warning, as it did long ago, before it was hidden by its owners for years, and then forgotten in the anxieties and alarms of the time.

In April 1746 the battle of Culloden was fought and lost; and Scotland was weeping the loss of many who had fallen in battle and on the scaffold, and of others who were flying the country, exiles for the rest of their days, or who, like the foxes, were hiding in dens and caves of the earth. The land shuddered under the iron heel of the Duke of Cumberland, who exercised his power with the utmost rigour and cruelty, burning and destroying the houses and farms of those suspected to have been disaffected, and punishing with death and imprisonment master and servant alike. Whether or not Innes of Balnacraig had actually been in arms against the king at St James's, he was known to be a strong and active Jacobite, and deep in their counsels; and as such he had fled into hiding to avoid being dealt with as many of his friends had been, perchance leaving his wife a widow and his children fatherless.

News soon came that the soldiers of the Duke were in the neighbourhood; and one summer morning the lady of Balnacraig saw the

red coats of a company of soldiers crossing the fields which lay between her house and the road to Aboyne, six miles away. Her heart had sunk when she heard of their approach from the north the day before; but she was a brave and clever woman, and resolved to do all she could to save her house and her husband's property.

The servant lasses had screamed and run away to hide their heads under the blankets on their bed in the attics when they heard of the soldiers coming, till they were bidden to come down to help their mistress in her trouble, for all hands were wanted; and then began the work on which the lady's heart was set. Such a slaying and plucking of hens, boiling and roasting of meat, and making of barley broth had never been seen before in the house of Balnacraig; and it continued far into the night, long after the terrified and excited children were asleep in their beds.

With the next midday came the soldiers—a company under a young captain, with two officers under him. It was very hot; the river below glittered in the sun; the corn, just turning into gold, basked in the heat; and far up the wild strath of the Dee lay the noonday mist, hiding the long ridge of Ben-y-bourd and Ben-A'an, and hardly revealing the dark rock of Craigdarroch which overhangs the pass of Ballater.

A halt was called when they reached the front of the house, and the captain, a young Englishman who had seen his first battle at Culloden, advanced to the door, bidding his men keep back, for there in the doorway stood a young woman alone—only her little daughter of ten clung to her skirt, trying hard to be as brave and calm as her mother.

'Madam,' said he, courteously uncovering, 'I am come for one James Innes, reported to be one of the disaffected against his Majesty King George. If he is in the house I must see him; and if he refuses, I must come in and search for him.'

Mrs Innes replied that he was not at Balnacraig; adding, with truth, that she knew not where he was, as he had been absent for some time. There was a pause, and then, calling up his two officers, the captain, in their presence, produced a paper, and read the indictment against the owner of the house, concluding with an order to bring him prisoner to Inverness, and to burn and destroy the house, as that of a rebel and traitor to the king's majesty and government.

There was a silence after these dreadful words, and then came the answer: 'You must do your bidding. I have none but womenkind and children in the house; and God help me and them, for if you drive us from here we have nowhere to hide our heads.'

Little Betty, when she saw her mother's tears, who had been so brave and busy till now, hid her head, and dared not look up.

One of the officers said a few words aside to the captain, and after a short conversation he spoke again.

'My men have had a long march this morning,' he said, 'and upon empty stomachs. We reached a farm some miles below, thinking to get a meal, and we found the house empty and the people fled, and they had not left a peck of meal nor a mouthful of whisky behind them. Every cow and sheep had been driven off, and there was nothing left but water out of the burn, for which my men have no fancy. At any rate, before we proceed to business, get us something to eat. I will keep the men on the green if you will bring out what you have, or we must come in and take it.'

Then the lady spoke again. 'Make your men sit down in the shade yonder,' she said, 'and I and my maids will bring out what we have; and come you and these gentlemen into the parlour, and take your meal there.'

'Meanwhile, by your leave, madam,' said the captain, 'I and my officers will come in—in case Mr Innes may not be gone so far from his house but that we may find him.' And in a few minutes their heavy steps were mounting the stair, opening and looking into the cupboards, and searching into every corner which would have hid a mouse. They found no one but the children, who had been shut up in the nursery, where one of the officers began to turn over the bedding and to thrust his bayonet into the mattresses, when the mother, with a scream, started forward and snatched up a one-year-old child fast asleep among the pillows, and Betty threw herself before the man with a loud cry.

And now the feast was ready, and the women were carrying out to the hungry men great iron pots of savoury broth, piles of bannocks, fresh and crisp, cans of new milk, and whisky in the large jars called in those days 'graybeards.' The soldiers, who had not fared too well in a country where every mouthful had been grudged them, sat down in the welcome shade, and the lasses, Kirsty and Beenie, were received with such rough but flattering welcome that ever after the day the soldiers came to Balnacraig was remembered as a white day in their lives.

Meanwhile, within the house, the officers were equally well regulated with boiled chickens and new-laid eggs, currant and gooseberry tarts and cream; and, with many a sigh from the housewife that her husband's good claret should be drunk by his enemies, cups were filled again and again and drained to pledge King George. And then, as good cheer and good wine raised their spirits and confused their politics, they toasted the lady of Balnacraig, and declared that, rebel though her husband was, she had given them of her best, and that her house should be safe from harm for the sake of her hospitality.

The sun had sunk below the western hills and the dew was falling before the soldiers departed from the house of Balnacraig; and as they marched in broken ranks down the hill, it was a hard matter for the most of them to

keep their legs; nevertheless, as they turned down the road which led to Aboyne, they gave a shout and another cheer to the lady and her household.

The children fell asleep that night in their beds talking of the soldiers. Their mother sat sad and alone in her disordered parlour, her courage departed and her spirits lowered, now that the danger had passed; but she had saved Balnacraig.

Betty, upstairs in the nursery, was telling how she had seen one of the soldiers empty the whisky-jar, and, in a frolic—for the whisky had flowed freely—had put his head into the 'gray-beard' that he might get the very last drop; and, in the midst of the shouts and laughter of his companions, how he had rolled down the hill with his head still in the jar.

The soldiers never came again to Balnacraig; and the house, which might have been left a

blackened ruin, remains very much as it was then, though all the fine furniture and the cherished relics are gone, and the garden and pleasure-grounds are grown wild. There are people alive now who remember Miss Betty and Miss Jean, who lived in the old house till they died, and who told the story of King George's soldiers, and how their mother saved the house; and Miss Betty especially was never tired of telling how the soldier had rolled down the hill with his head in the jar that had held the whisky.

Miss Betty and Miss Jean have lain for many years with their kindred in the old burial-ground at Aboyne; but there stands the house, as we see it to-day, with the great trees sheltering it, which, in their youth, were witnesses of another order of things in the troubled days that followed upon the battle of Culloden. G. E. B.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER III.—RECOVERY.

IN a temperature of 120° in the shade, it required a strong constitution and very careful nursing to carry a patient through the slow and perilous course of an attack of typhoid fever. Young Hulme was fortunate in having both, and at the end of a month the sure but tedious process of convalescence set in.

He awoke from a sleep one evening with a clearer perception of his situation than he had yet enjoyed. Mrs Brady was quietly putting the room in order, and he watched her silently for several minutes, until she observed him looking at her.

'Ah,' she said, 'you are getting better now. That was a fine sleep you had.'

'I am very weak, and feel a lot of pain; but I know I must be better.'

After a pause he added faintly:

'How good you have been to me!'

'Nonsense,' said the woman. 'Now, you must keep quiet, you know. I will give you a little broth; then, maybe, you will go to sleep again.'

She administered the nourishment with a spoon, and when the patient said he would like more she shook her head.

'You must bear with your appetite for some days yet,' she remarked, 'for, now we have got you through the fever, it would never do to send you back into it again. Try and sleep.'

He closed his eyes, but sleep would not come just then. He was trying to give intelligible shape to a vision that was floating through his brain. He had a dim and grateful sense of a very soft and cool hand and a gentle face, but could not be certain that he had not been dreaming

of his mother. Mrs Brady was all kindness and gentleness to him—but it was not Mrs Brady. Her hand and face were both very gentle indeed, but they were rough with hard work.

'Mrs Brady,' he said.

'Yes.'

'Any news of—of Jim?'

'Not yet. Why, he has only been a month away. It is too soon to hear from him. My man has been three months away at Hannan's.'

'Has there been—any person—except yourself nursing me?'

'Why, it isn't much I could find time to do for you, with my own house and family to look after. If it wasn't for Miss Lily I don't know where you would be.'

'Miss Lily?'

'Yes. Half-a-dozen times a day, and mostly all night, she has been here with you. I don't know how she has stood it, with her hard work at the bar as well.'

'God bless her!' he said in a whisper.

'Well you may say that,' observed Mrs Brady, who had overheard the words. 'Considering you are a stranger to her, she is the best girl I ever knew. But there!—when a man's sick and wants nursing, it's no matter whether he is a stranger or not.'

'Will she—will Miss Lily—come this evening?'

'She is sure to come—in an hour or so. Now try and sleep; she would be so glad to find you sleeping.'

Thus encouraged, he closed his eyes. He was soon in a light but refreshing sleep. Before he awoke the girl came, and sat by the bedside watching him. The fatigue and want of rest during the last four weeks had left their mark upon her face. Her eyes were not so bright,

and she was very pale; still, the beauty was not obliterated, but was rather refined and spiritualised by the traces of fatigue and the expression of solicitude. It is little wonder that sick men, when convalescent and conscious of the gentle care bestowed upon them with so much silent patience, fall in love sometimes with their nurses. At what other time is the almost angelic softness of a woman's nature so keenly felt?

When he opened his eyes and beheld the girl, his first expression of feeling was a long sigh.

'I am glad to see you so much better,' she said softly, leaning a little over him.

He put out his arm, and she let him take one of her hands in his and hold it gratefully for a minute.

'Ah, Miss Lily,' he whispered, 'you have been an angel to me in a strange land. I—I have been thinking of you this evening, not knowing it was you. Until Mrs Brady told me, I thought I had been dreaming about—about my mother. She is dead.'

The girl regarded him with eyes of tender pity, and gently released her hand. Then she glanced round the room. Mrs Brady had left nothing to be done there.

'Mrs Brady has given you some broth, I suppose?'

'Yes, Miss Lily.'

'Well, I will give you a little milk now. Then I must go; but I will return in an hour and stay with you.'

The girl gave him the milk, and made his pillow comfortable.

'Do you think you could sleep a little more?' she asked.

'I will try, Miss Lily. It is very hard upon you to come here, and very selfish of me to wish to see you again. But I can't help it—indeed I can't!'

She only laughed, and bade him try to sleep, promising to be back in an hour and bring her needlework with her. She kept her word; and for hours he lay looking at her plying her busy fingers in a corner of the room. She refused to talk to him or allow him to talk; and until he fell asleep late in the night he exchanged no word with his nurse save when, from time to time, she came to administer some small nourishment to him.

In the course of a week, however, Hulme had made so much progress towards recovery that the barmaid had less occasion to devote herself to him than she had been doing, and was able to take some rest. She did not come so often now, or remain so long when she came. Mrs Brady continued to do all that was necessary. The less frequent and shorter visits of the girl, although Hulme acknowledged that she sadly needed rest, were nevertheless a gradual withdrawal from his sight of a presence that made convalescence a happiness. She seldom remained more than a few minutes.

One evening, however, he made bold to ask her to sit with him for a while. With a little hesitation, she drew a chair to the bedside and sat down.

'I see so little of you now, Miss Lily,' he said; 'and after all your kindness to me, I feel it hard not to be able to get opportunity enough to tell you how grateful I shall always be. I shall never forget what I owe you.'

'But there are Mrs Brady and Jim,' she answered; 'you owe still more to them. Do not begin to thank me or I shall have to go away.'

'Very well,' he answered, with a smile; but he caught one of her hands unawares and put it to his lips. 'There—forgive me, Miss Lily; my heart is very full.'

The colour rose in the girl's face, and for some seconds she forgot to withdraw her hand from his, or refrained from doing so.

'Is there no news of Jim?' he asked.

'No; none at all. A man who has been prospecting in the same district returned a week ago, but saw or heard nothing of Jim. But then, there is nothing surprising in that; the bush is a lonely place.'

'Poor Jim! I wish I saw his face again.'

'So you shall. Prospecting, you know, is tedious work; but Jim will soon be back again, successful or not, because his provisions will run out.'

After a minute's pause she asked:

'What was the reason Jim took such a fancy to you?'

'He never told me. But I suspect, from a word he let drop one night, that he knew my mother when she was a girl.'

'Ah! You said she was dead.'

'Yes, Miss Lily.' He paused a while, and added: 'Father died over two years ago. He was a clergyman. After his death mother fretted a good deal, and her health became delicate. Then two scoundrels—her trustees—made away with all her money, and the shock broke her heart. She died the same day she received their letters.'

'Her trustees' letters?'

'There is a letter-case in the pocket of that coat hanging by the door. If you will give it to me, Miss Lily, I will show you the two letters that killed my mother. They will explain everything better than I can do it.'

The girl did as he desired, and he put into her hands the two letters. She turned very pale as she read them. After reading them a second time, she handed them back without a word.

'Miss Lily! Are you ill?' he exclaimed, noticing the sudden change in her looks.

'Not very well, I think; I have had to attend the bar a great part of the last three nights. I think I will go home and lie down. Good-bye!'

She gave him her hand and rose. He looked at her with pain and perplexity. She had never parted from him before in this manner. He did not know what to say; and before he could

utter a word she was gone, merely turning her head at the door with a parting smile.

Miss Lily came no more. She did, indeed, send more than one message of inquiry, but that was all. Mrs Brady could give Hulme no explanation beyond the reasonable but unsatisfactory one that he required the girl's ministrations no longer. He wished he were able to go down to the bar and see her; but this was out of the question for some weeks yet. At last he sent a short letter to her: 'Dear Miss LILY,—Will you not come to see me any more?—Yours, R. H.' The answer was: 'Dear Mr HULME,—I hear of your convalescence regularly. I am kept very, very busy.—Yours, LILY.'

'Yours, Lily.' What pleasure this simple and familiar conclusion would have given him had the rest of the little letter been different! She had evaded an answer to his inquiry; and, with a heavy heart, he interpreted the evasion as a negative. She would not come to see him again, and the reason was an impenetrable mystery to him.

This was not the only trouble which attended his recovery. When, at length, he was able to walk about a little, he avoided going near the bar where Miss Lily was employed, and where all the news of the place was retailed and discussed. But he heard enough to make him very anxious concerning Jim Solus. Nothing had been heard of Jim since he left Coolgardie. His stock of 'tucker' could never have lasted him so long, and there was nothing to be got in the bush except lizards and snakes. He would hardly try to sustain life on these things whilst within reach of settlements. He had not been heard of at 'Twenty-five Mile,' nor at 'Hannan's,' nor at any of the mining camps. Worst sign of all, the little country horse he had taken with him had been found in the bush, some miles out, dead of thirst, with a portion of the cart still yoked to it. Miners in Coolgardie, who knew the bush well and what these things portended, shook their heads and expressed their conviction that Jim Solus was dead.

If this was so, the situation of Hulme would be a sad one. With enfeebled health, which it would take him some months to recover, he would be capable of no exertion such as the conditions of the country demanded. He began to see how foolish he had been ever to come here. He had much better have remained in England. There, at least, he had a post worth keeping. Had Jim Solus lived, successful or not, Hulme felt sure of a friend experienced in all the ways of the country. He could not avoid sharing the conviction of those who were best able to judge, that poor Jim was dead. There was nothing uncommon in a miner dying of thirst in the bush. Jim only shared the fate of many others.

And Miss Lily, for some unknown reason, had also deserted him. He felt this loss all the more because, as a stranger, he had no claim

upon her, and he owed her a deep debt for her unselfish devotion to him during his illness. He had heard that barmaids frequently performed these offices of mercy for sick miners. They would not expect to be bound in any way to their patients after the latter were recovered. Why should they? Hulme was afraid he had betrayed his heart too plainly to his young nurse, and so sent her away from him. What claim could such as he have upon the thoughts of any girl in the country?

Swallowing the bitter draught as best he could, he began to consider seriously what to do next. He was afraid there was no prospect for him in Western Australia. It would take him long to acquire strength and experience enough to hold out any hope of success. It was a blind mistake to have come here at all. Thank God, he had enough money in the bank to pay his passage back to England. Whether his prospects in England would be much better than they were here, there would be time enough to consider when he got back.

One evening Mrs Brady came to him in high spirits. Her 'man' had returned home, and had been fairly successful in his expedition to 'Hannan's.' He was coming over to see Hulme by-and-by, and was at present down at one of the bars, talking to the men there.

'I suppose he has heard nothing of Jim?'

'Ah, poor Jim! No; I'm afraid there will never be anything heard of Jim again.'

After sunset Brady came to see him—a strong, bushy-haired man, with a complexion sunburnt to the colour of bronze. In his rough and hearty way he congratulated the young man on his recovery, and gave expression to his deep satisfaction that his 'missus' had been able to be of use to him.

Hulme was expressing his gratitude to Mrs Brady when her husband interrupted him.

'Why, man, a job like that is as good as a holiday to her! She'll feel the better of it for a twelvemonth to come. It's a way with women—they're curious creatures, but tremenjus good! There's the barnmaid, Miss Lily, too. That girl is a brick. She deserves a better man than the fellow that's going to have her.'

'Who?' cried poor Hulme, with a painful dropping of the heart.

'He's her father's partner. I suppose you weren't long enough about to know one or the other. They have struck a good claim, I believe, and are going to float it as a company—out in the same district poor Jim Solus went to.'

'Who are they? What are their names?'

'Don't you know Miss Lily's name?'

'No; I never heard her called anything except Miss Lily.'

Hulme recollected at the moment as curious, and probably unintended, the simple signature of 'Lily' appended to the note he had received from her.

'Her father's name is Warner. His partner, the

man who is to have Miss Lily, is called Revel. They say he is a lawyer.'

Hulme was almost stunned. With a gasp he repeated the names, 'Warner—Revel,' and stared blankly before him.

'Do you know them?' asked Brady, removing the pipe from his mouth.

Hulme did not answer for a minute.

'Yes—no; that is, I have never seen the men, but I know something about them.'

'Nothing good, I'll bet. They are a shady-looking pair. Since they came to Coolgardie they have been living on the earnings of Miss Lily, and whatever their wits obtained for them.'

'But how is it known that Revel is to have Miss Lily?'

'Everybody knows it. They are gone.'

'Gone!—Where?' cried Hulme, with a start.

'To England. As I told you, they are going to float their mine—"Revel's Find" they call it—and, of course, London is the place for that kind of business. They left Coolgardie early this morning for Perth.'

Brady was kind enough to go away soon after this. Hulme was in a kind of stupor of misery. Gone!—without a word of farewell. Gone, with the men who had killed his mother, to become the wife of one of them. Oh, Miss Lily!

He recalled now, with mixed emotions of bitterness and surprise, the change in the girl's countenance when she read the two letters he had shown her. How could she consent to be the wife of Revel after reading them? Her father was no better than Revel; but still he was her father. But there was no creditable, no plausible theory that would explain her giving herself voluntarily to the other villain. She might have been engaged to him already; but no girl of honour and spirit would keep such an engagement.

Her sudden dropping of Hulme's acquaintance, after discovering that her father and lover were the false trustees of the young man's mother, was not the least perplexing or painful part of her conduct. Was she ashamed of them, but still determined to stand by them? Hulme would never have believed it of her; but there was the fact. And now that they had got a gold-mine

to dispose of in London, she had gone away with them, to marry Revel as soon as the property was sold.

Hulme, hardly knowing what he did, reeled down to the bar that night. In Miss Lily's place there was now another girl. She knew Hulme, and showed herself very glad to see him.

'So Miss Lily, I hear, is gone?'

'Oh yes, gone to England. They started this morning. But didn't you see her before she went?'

'No,' he said; 'I only heard of it half-an-hour ago.'

'Well, that's curious,' remarked the girl. 'After nursing you through your illness, the least she could have done was to go and bid you good-bye. I know I should have done it—or any other girl.'

'I hear she is to be married in England,' said Hulme, with a bitterness he could not conceal from the girl. 'Perhaps her mind was too full of that.'

'If she marries Revel she will be sorry for her bargain. I always thought she detested him,' said the girl.

'Maybe the gold-mine gilds him?'

'The men don't believe he came by the mine honestly. Why, he wasn't a fortnight away, and wouldn't have known a gold-mine from a potato-garden! And what has become of Jim Solus? If Lily is fool enough to marry that man, she's likely to have troubles before her.'

But Lily knew what he was already. She knew how he had ruined Hulme's mother and tried to throw the guilt on her father. And yet, knowing this—knowing, as she must have known (for the barmaids hear everything), that he was suspected of having obtained the gold claim by unfair if not foul means—she had gone home with the man, to marry him! Fugh! Hulme could not bear to think of it. He was sorry from his heart that he was under any obligation to her—that he had ever met her. And how could Warner and Revel have known the direction in which poor Jim had gone prospecting if she had not betrayed his confidence to them? Dicky Hulme's faith in woman was gone.

(To be continued.)

OUR INDIAN NATIVE CAVALRY.



VERY little is known to the public generally, or even to the majority of military men, regarding the organisation of our Indian native cavalry regiments, being, as they are (with the exception of the three regiments of Madras Laneers), raised on a system absolutely peculiar to the country, and a relic, so to speak, of native India before the arrival of the British Government.

It will come as a surprise to most people to learn that the native trooper not only feeds and clothes himself, but that his horse, saddlery, arms (with the exception of his carbine), and transport are not the property of Government, but his own, paid for out of his own pocket, and kept up at his own proper expense.

This system, known as the 'silladar system,' of course originated with the rough old times, when every man of the fighting classes of India

was of necessity a soldier from his birth, armed and equipped to the best of his means, and, very much as are the tribesmen on the frontier with whom we have lately been fighting, ready to join in any disturbance which might, directly or indirectly, affect him.

When a man wishes to enlist in a *silladar* cavalry regiment, he must provide himself with a horse, saddlery, a lance (if his regiment are lancers), a sword, his uniform, and his transport; or else he must be employed as a rider by some other person who is the happy possessor of all these necessities. In the former case he is called a *silladar*, or the owner of an *assami*; and in the latter case a *bargir*, and his employer his *silladar*.

A *silladar* draws pay for his *assami* and also for his own services. Thus, if a man owns two *assamis*, he draws two lots of horse pay and one lot of pay for himself, a corresponding amount to this last being paid to the man who rides his second horse—that is to say, to his *bargir*.

In some regiments, until comparatively recently, it was quite usual for one man to own ten or twelve *assamis*, or even an entire troop. More than this, it was not unusual for an *assami* to be left by will to a man's wife or infant child; in which case the executors employed a substitute (*awas kidmat*) to ride for the woman or child, thus enabling the owner to draw horse pay. This practice is still common in some native states.

Of late years the practice of employing *bargirs* has been discouraged, as it is thought advisable that every trooper should himself have some stake in the regiment; and only a sufficient number to ride the second chargers of the native officers are permitted to be engaged.

The upkeep of his own transport by the *silladar* is managed in this wise. All the horses in a regiment are told off in pairs, and to every pair is attached a *saise*, or groom, and a transport pony, with pack-saddle, line gear, &c., complete. Now, the owners of those two horses have not only to buy that pony and its belongings between them, but have in addition to feed it, keep up its equipment, and pay the *saise*. Hence an *assami* may be said to include half a pony and equipment—the upkeep of a servant and half the feed of a pony being reckoned among the liabilities of its *silladar*.

Theoretically, a man may join bringing his horse, &c., with him, provided his outfit meet with the approval of his commanding officer; and formerly, in the infancy of *silladar* cavalry, he generally did this. Modern ideas, however, require a better horse than the native would generally have facilities for obtaining, and also demand a certain amount of uniformity in saddlery, arms, and equipment.

Nowadays, therefore, by the institution of regimental funds, originally started by an advance

from Government, all the items of a *silladar's* equipment can be purchased regimentally at a certain fixed price; and when a recruit joins he must pay the money equivalent of his *assami*, whatever it may be in his particular regiment.

Of course, it is desirable that a man should on joining pay the whole amount required of him, and start clear; but, in the case of a desirable man, it is usual to accept something less than the full *assami* price, advancing the remainder out of regimental funds at a small rate of interest, and recovering it by instalments from his monthly pay. Further, if an old soldier should require any new article of uniform, saddlery, line gear, &c., he goes to the regimental stores, where such articles are kept (having been purchased in large quantities at wholesale prices by the 'store fund,' and where a staff of tailors, saddlers, shoemakers, &c. are employed), and becomes a debtor to the regiment to the extent of his 'store bill;' which amount, unless he wishes to pay ready money, is recovered in the same way. To a great extent, then, the commanding officer of a *silladar* cavalry regiment is a banker or trader, and keeps, on behalf of his regiment, a debit and credit account with each one of his men individually.

There are many funds, but as a horse is the most important item of a cavalry soldier's equipment, the '*chundah* fund,' which provides for the purchase of remounts (or, in some regiments, for their breeding), may be said to be the most important.

The fund is of course started, in the first place, by a Government advance, enabling the original commanding officer of a new regiment to purchase a certain number of horses.

These horses are issued to men who join as they pay for them, the price fixed being the average amount at which remounts can be obtained.

When a man leaves his regiment he may take his horse, or indeed any of his property, with him, or may sell it back to the regiment at the price he gave for it; in the case of saddlery, equipment, &c., a small yearly deduction being made on the original price for wear-and-tear. As, however, horses die and become unserviceable, and it would be exceedingly hard on a man who lost his horse to have to procure a new one out of his own pocket, every man pays a monthly subscription to the '*chundah* fund' by way of insurance, on the receipt of which the regiment undertakes to replace his horse in case of anything happening to it, unless the accident is the result of his own carelessness. All cast horses become the property of the '*chundah* fund.' The '*pony chundah* fund' provides the men with ponies in much the same way.

After the purchase of a horse, its feeding is the next most necessary item, so that the '*grass fund*,' which is called by different names in different parts of India, may be reckoned as the next most important.

Government allows a tract of land to every regiment, the grass on which is supposed to be sufficient to supply the animals belonging to it; thus, only the cutting and carting has to be paid for by the men, and is taken from them in equal monthly instalments, the original lump sum having been found by the fund.

In most cases the land allotted to a regiment produces more grass than is absolutely necessary for its wants, in which case the commanding officer generally sells the surplus, thus minimising the ultimate charge against the men. In most cases the *silladar* buys his own grain in the open market.

The natural inference to be drawn from reading this account of the system, at all events by the uninitiated, is that the native cavalry soldier must be a man of means, in the first place, and must be uncommonly well paid to enable him to meet all the charges to which he is liable.

This is so far true inasmuch that in order to become a *silladar* a man must have a certain amount of money at his disposal to pay for his *assami*; and in this one great advantage of the system lies, providing, as it does, that only a superior class of men are enlisted. Another advantage of the system, that it produces the cheapest cavalry in the world, is not at first apparent; but when one learns that the pay of a *silladar* (horse pay and all) when he joins is thirty-one rupees per month, or about £2 at the present rate of exchange, this will be more easily understood.

To make the above sum sufficient for the various expenses a man is bound to incur, and to leave enough for his private wants and those of his family, is, even in a country of small coins and infinitesimal charges, like India, by no means an easy matter; and the ability so to manage his funds that the men may be subjected to as small deductions as possible, and at the same time that his regiment may be sound financially,

is not one of the least necessary qualifications of an officer commanding *silladar* cavalry.

Native commissioned and non-commissioned officers are in much better case, as their pay is materially increased, while their expenses are very little greater than those of the men; but even with the addition of good-conduct pay, which may add two or three rupees per month to a trooper's income, it is difficult for an uninitiated European to understand what advantage can possibly accrue to our native cavalry soldiers from serving the *Sirkar*, or Government.

The majority of regiments have a complement of nine British officers (not including the medical officer), there being four native officers per squadron, and a '*woordie* major,' or native adjutant.

The highest native commissioned rank is that of '*ressaldar* major.' *Ressaldars* and *ressaidars* come next, and the lowest grade are *jemadars*.

Of the non-commissioned grades the *koti duffadar* (corresponding to the squadron sergeant-major in British cavalry) is the highest; then come the *duffadars* or sergeants, and then the *lance-duffadars*. This last grade is merely an appointment, and carries with it no additional pay.

The native commissioned officers may either rise from the ranks or be granted direct commissions. Such commissions are often granted to men of standing who are likely to bring a following of recruits.

Taken as a whole, *silladar* cavalry, being, as it is, perfectly independent of transport, and ready to start on any march at a few hours' notice, is about the most perfect thing of the kind that can be imagined. In addition to this, the stake which every man has in the regiment is a great inducement to good behaviour. A good class are enlisted, and expense is saved to the State. The majority of the men who enlist are soldiers born, and it is only necessary to see one of our Indian cavalry regiments on parade to be convinced of the efficacy of the '*silladar* system.'

VINDICATION.

PART III.



HE steps were high and went sharply downward, a grim and dismal passage showing itself in the flickering candle-light to be low-roofed and narrow, and with an unwholesome slime hanging about its walls—the damp and mouldy odour, either from that or from the place to which it led, strong in my nostrils. But I saw that all was hung so thickly with cobwebs—a flimsy barrier of them straight across, save five or six steps below—that neither honest man nor murderer could have set foot in that place for many days.

I did not pause to consider what the presence I was aware of could have been. My thoughts were at that moment otherwise arrested.

I had held the candle, looking down, wondering to what secret hiding-place this hidden passage would presently lead my steps—and full of a vague hope and exaltation it would have been impossible to put into words—and my eye had fallen on something lying but a short distance from me. I went down a step to lift it. It lay at one side, close to the wall, and was of a small, square shape—all this strange confusion of events surging in my brain so that I knew

not what to look for next—and when I had it in my hand I saw it was a small metal box.

It was metal from the weight of it, encrusted with rust and blackness. How long it had lain, lost or forgotten, in that grisly place I did not pause to consider, being full of the hope of opening it; for I was not afraid to turn my back to the passage now, and take my new possession to the fire.

If it had had tongue to speak! I roughly scraped and rubbed it; and then, putting all my force into the effort, strove with finger and thumb to bring it apart. I might have spared my strength. It gave at the first touch, being only a plain box with lid; and I stood gazing on a small piece of wood that had dropped out of it and lay on the floor at my feet.

As I lifted it, and my eyes fell on figures roughly scratched on one side, a certain disappointment fell on me, for I could see no words of any kind. There appeared to be something on each side, cut with a knife or some sharp tool; but I could only suppose that each was some sort of measurement, and stare at it again and again. Four on each—rudely made, but amazingly legible—as if some calculation had been taken from the four points of the compass.

A light broke in upon me. The blood rushed to my brain. The writing I held in my hand was a guide.

I was certain of it now; I was on the track of treasure. And I should not have to seek farther, in every crack and corner of the place; here were, doubtless, the very measurements by which I should find it. The secret passage had been known only to Francis Prestyn, who had been lord of all that land. Might he not have escaped after having hidden it, dropping this box with the measurements he had prepared, lest his recollection should have lost aught when he came back again, in his haste to be gone?

There were four marks on one side. I would take that side first. I would try the walls, the floor, the very ceiling, it might be—everything the room contained. And now I rejoiced that I had brought tools with me, that I had all facility of measurement. I was in a strange, wild fever.

'Tis written there is none knows what is in the heart of man; and yet, if I had been forewarned, I could not have believed it possible. I own it, to my shame—with all this thought of treasure, something laid hold upon me—and I fear I thought but little of Francis Prestyn in that hour. The fever that they say is in the breast of each man living—yet I would have sworn it was not in mine—began to burn within me.

I was on the track of treasure. The wind shrieked it; I heard the echo of it in the blast ere each gust broke; the solitary place cried it aloud. I went to the window and looked out, drawing aside a curtain, with a sudden fear of watchers, a sordid dread of any soul sharing the

secret with me. It was dark and moonless as before. I could hear an owl hoot in the ivy; and no other sound smote upon my ear, near or far, but the roaring of the hurricane.

I drew the curtain back again in unreasonable anger that I had lost so many hours, and took the measurement in my hands.

Where should I begin? Upon the wall which contained the sliding panel—for no other reason than that it did contain it, and that my eyes went all the time to its gaping stairway. I took the first measurement from top to bottom, again from bottom to top, the third from the more distant corner, the fourth from the shorter—and stood stupidly staring as one in a dream. For the measurement on that side of the wood I had happened on first was the measurement of the panel.

It was that, and that only. If I had had the wood in my hand earlier it would have led me straight to the place where I should have pressed; it would have laid bare to me the whole secret of it and of the hidden way. And now the one thought stared me in the face—where was the treasure?

Was it to be looked for in the room; or should I first see whither this stairway led, and know for myself that I had been right in my imaginings? That it led in some way into the outer air I had no moment's doubt in my mind; yet as I paused, asking myself the question, and looked down, candle in hand, at the gloom and darkness of it, I determined to descend.

The damp, unwholesome odour grew strong within my nostrils as I stepped into its narrowness. I passed through the wall of cobweb, setting my feet slowly on each step, remembering, with a strange sense of one walking in a dream, I had left another candle burning in the room above. Yet I was conscious of no fear, only of a strange chill. The remembrance came to me that, only a few short hours before, I had thought the room I had left behind the grimmest and most dismal place I had set eyes on. Now, with its leaping fire and with a short familiarity, the recollection of it as I trod this gloomy stairway was of a place of warmth and light.

And now the narrow passage I was in began to turn and curve. I followed the twistings of it, and I knew that I was soon treading in an opposite direction to that in which I had started. Yet the darkness, the mouldering odours, its narrowness and lowness of roofing, held no fear. I would have gone on had a fiend awaited me.

My foot strained at last to find another step. I was on level ground. There was such impenetrable blackness and darkness around that I held the candle high above my head, my eyes growing slowly accustomed to the gloom, my steps advancing foot by foot, sometimes stumbling, yet certain that I was descending no longer. And as the walls of a room became visible, it began to be borne in upon me that the stairway did

not lead to the outer air at all—that I was in a dungeon.

A black and dismal place, long and narrow. I gave it the name of dungeon in my own thoughts, because no other came to my mind at the moment, peering round at its damp-encrusted walls and down at its uneven stone floor, where a moment later I nearly stumbled over something in the darkness.

I threw the light upon it, straining my eyes to the utmost. My hands went out and touched it, and a riot was in my veins again, for, handling it on all sides, I knew it to be a box—a chest perhaps—a long, narrow receptacle of some kind. But I thrust my arms into it—and it was empty.

I could see clearer now, and held the candle down that I might look at its sides. It was of some black wood, curiously earven, and with a handle set at the end nearest me; no doubt there was another. I held the light over, and saw that it held nothing but one or two stones that lay in discoloured settings—pieces of glass I thought them at first—which might once have formed part of a necklace. I moved it a little to one side.

Loose upon the ground, close beside it, was a small, scattered heap—something dropped there, plainly, in the emptying of the treasure-box—for that this was the thing I sought I had now no doubt. There were coins—valueless, one might have thought at first, and copper-coloured, like a child's hoard of pence; but, dull and discoloured as they were, I had knowledge enough, as I raised one and turned it over and over, to see that I was stooping over gold.

I looked for more, carrying my light about the dismal place, and peering in every corner. There was earth on the stones in one place, and something lying near it that looked like a spade; but beyond the few jewels—for so I took them to be—in the box, and the scattered heap beside it, my eyes found nothing more. The treasure was hidden.

Why it had been emptied out from the chest I did not know, nor did I wait to think upon it. It was enough for one man, surely, that he had found its hiding-place; for that it was near me, soon to be within my very reach, there was no manner of doubt in my mind.

It was hidden in this dungeon, or, rather, small vault, a place occupying little space, yet of a considerable length, known only—that was clearer and clearer to my vision—to one acquainted with the secret of the sliding panel.

It was all plain at last, even as an open book. Francis Prestlyn had known the secret of the panelled room. I saw that he had lain in it, intending to hide the treasure in the dungeon; that he had been awake and stirring when others were asleep, even as I.

I set the candle on the floor, taking the measure

of the place foursquare with hands that were hot and cold alternately, for I knew my triumph was at hand.

The rotting odour of the place had no power to turn me faint. Inch by inch, foot by foot, I crawled round upon the floor, setting the candle near me, following the figures the long-dead man had made out on the other side of the wood. And it was even as I had hoped—nay, rather, as I had steadily believed from the moment I had set eyes upon this place—they led me slowly and surely to one spot. I stood up and stretched my arms, and uttered a cry that was lost in the roar of the wind. I had found the hiding-place of the treasure.

A thousand things crowded before my vision, even there in that dismal solitude. My memory went back; and, step by step, I saw the path that had led me hither. And the gale, screaming overhead, was a psalm of triumph. And my life before had led up to this—was for this only, and to this end. A fierce intoxication, a thirst of gain, a mad fever rioted in my veins.

I put the candle on the floor, and left it flickering there—in the place that was the centre of all to me—over the treasure that had drawn me from the Low Countries, and went up the narrow stairway, wanting nothing now but certain tools, knowing that I had within me the strength of three.

The fire burned redly now, but I did not pause to do more than seek what I needed and find it, being in a fever to retrace my way.

The tools were in my hands. I had left the glow and warmth behind, and groped my way down the narrow steps. And when I had accomplished the journey, when I set eyes upon my candle again, flaring in the darkness, throwing strange shadows on the stone that I had traced out inch by inch by the dead man's measurement, my heart was nigh to bursting.

This was the end of it, and to this purpose was I born. He had been the hider, I the finder. We were both of one name, one blood—almost one soul—and no foot but mine, I could see, had ever disturbed the silence of this place from that night.

And now the stone, worked at with a very giant's strength, was slowly loosening. I could have uttered that wild cry again, but feared lest, in spite of the wind, some one might hear me. I raised it inch by inch, moving the candle a hundred times—going round it on my knees—stooping over it, tools in hand; and at last, with a grip that might have had the strength of three in it, I wrenched it from its place, and did not even let my eyes look into the hollow till I had taken up the candle.

I heard the tempest shrieking like a lost soul as I looked down into the hiding-place.

There was no treasure there—but the skeleton

of a man, the flesh long mouldered from the bones; and, on what had once been the finger of a hand, a signet-ring.

It was all before me—as if I, late vindicator of Francis Prestyn's honour, had known him followed and watched. I saw him dig the hiding-place for the treasure that he might preserve it for his king. I heard the dogging step of murder. I had it borne in upon me that the face of the man who

looked out from the narrow stairway, waiting to strike him down, was that of the innkeeper—as if I had been a watcher by his side.

But it was the earlier figure that was last before my eyes.

It was the one I had seen in the room above, pacing the floor, looking into the drowsy fire. I saw him bending over the carvings on the wood, hopeful, eager, with eyes alight, making the measurements—for his grave.

QUEER METHODS OF KEEPING ACCOUNTS.

THAT'S the way I've kept my accounts all my life, and my aunt before me,' said an illiterate grocer to a county-court judge recently, while holding up a slate upon which were chalk-marks which conjured up memories of our earliest school-days, with noughts and crosses. 'The circles are shillings, and a stroke is sixpence; when the money is paid I rub the marks out.' 'It looks,' remarked the judge, 'like an Egyptian inscription. And in this way you have kept your accounts on the door?' 'Yes,' promptly replied the litigant; 'and I have never before had a dispute over sixpence.' In giving judgment for the plaintiff, the judge remarked that people should deal at shops where accounts were kept in a more orthodox fashion, and then disputes would not arise.

But, in spite of twenty-seven years of compulsory education, accounts are still in many instances kept in a more or less original fashion.

Some years ago there lived in a Cornish fishing-village an old man who kept a general dealer's shop—the only shop in the place. He was quite illiterate, and kept his accounts in a most ingenious fashion. For every customer he obtained a square stick of deal about eighteen inches long, and on this stick he kept tally of the amounts due to him by means of various-shaped notches cut with a knife on the edges of the stick. When a customer settled the account the stick was burned. No one but the old man understood the meaning of the notches, or which stick belonged to any individual customer, with the result that at his death the outstanding accounts on the big bundle of sticks found under the counter could not be collected.

Another uneducated tradesman—a shoemaker—had a most elaborate method of keeping his 'books.' Against the wall of his workshop he had a large board erected, which he painted black. Into this board he used to drive hobnails, tacks, brass and steel rivets, and other nails used in his trade, to represent work done. For instance, the soling of a pair of boots would be represented by a small piece of leather tacked on to the board by means of a brass rivet; but if the

boots were hobnailed, then a hobnail was used instead of the brass rivet. A steel rivet indicated a patch on the sole, and a patch on the upper was shown by the addition of a piece of thin leather. New boots were shown drawn in chalk, as were also the hieroglyphics representing the customers' names. Some peculiarity of manner, dress, or surroundings was chosen to indicate whose account it was. The parson's account was placed under the rough drawing of a church; the curate, who wore glasses, was represented by a sketch of them; a couple of circles, one blank and one with a dot in the centre, stood for the postman, who had lost an eye. A beer-barrel was the innkeeper's sign; the village pump did duty for the milkman; while the schoolmaster was personated by the drawing of a cane. The old man was a great wag, but he never had his accounts challenged, in spite of their quaintness.

Much amusement was caused in a west of England bankruptcy case recently, when, in response to the request for the production of his books, the debtor—an ironmonger—handed up a book marked 'Ledger,' in which, instead of the regulation numerals, were rough sketches of kettles, saucepans, frying-pans, lamps, and similar articles, together with figures shaped like wriggling snakes, and signs reminding one of a shorthand-writer's notes. 'I asked for your books of account, not for your copy of the inscription on Cleopatra's Needle, which I take this to be,' said the judge. 'Please your honour,' said the debtor, 'that is my account-book.' Although this man could both read and write, yet he kept his accounts in this fashion in order that his wife, who was a great drinker, should not know what the takings of the shop were. It took over a week for the bankrupt to unravel the mysteries of this book and dictate them to a clerk.

A washerwoman, who was employed by a country gentleman, used to keep her accounts on the blackened beam of her kitchen. A chalk-mark across the beam stood for a day's work, and one half-way across for half a day. Her account against the hall ran into several pounds before she ventured to ask for it, and the gentleman had to visit her cottage and inspect the

beam so as to satisfy himself as to the correctness of the amount.

An old lady in a small country town has kept for the last twenty years, and still keeps, her accounts in doggerel verse. For example (and the specimens given are actual extracts from her books), if Mrs Jones has half-a-pound of tea on 'tick,' it is entered thus :

Mrs Jones doth owe to me,
For half-a-pound of souchong tea,.....1s. 4d.

Or if Mr Smith buys a pound of sugar, two pounds of rice, and a Dutch cheese, the entry will be, under Smith's name :

A pound of moist sugar,
And two of best rice,
With four pounds of Dutch cheese,
Which I hope will be nice.....1s. 11½d.

And so on, all through the book. In some cases the verses express doubt as to the customer's intention or ability to pay for the goods ordered. Thus :

Lizzie Barber for her father
Had some flour to-day;
Some apples too, and toilet-soap,
But I don't believe he'll pay.....2s. 3d.
[This booking work will drive me mad
When I think of folk like they.]

The lines in brackets are very suggestive, if not exactly grammatical.

Such methods of keeping accounts as these often produce strange and comical predicaments. An old lady who kept her accounts in chalk on the back of her shop door, in a system known to only herself, fell ill. Her son came home to manage the shop until his mother got better, but he did not understand her method of 'booking.' The result was that every time a customer came to 'settle up,' the son had to unhinge the door and carry it up to his mother's bedroom, so that she might calculate the amount of the debt. He stood this for a day or two, and then gave the door a coat of paint, thus settling the accounts once and for all. The old lady declared, when she got down again, that by the action of her son she lost nearly a hundred pounds.

A tailor, who used to jot down his customers' indebtedness in lead-pencil on the whitewashed wall of his shop, was taken ill with smallpox, and was removed to the isolation hospital. On his recovery he found that the sanitary authorities had disinfected his house, and used lime-wash to such good purpose that all his accounts had disappeared. In this case, however, the authorities were forced to compensate the man, and it was generally considered that he saw his opportunity and seized it, judging by the amount he received.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

OUR DAILY BREAD.



AMONG the multitude of topics considered at the Bristol meeting of the British Association, that which has possibly aroused the greatest interest is the presidential utterance with regard to the world's wheat-supply. If Sir William Crookes's figures and assumptions are correct, the world will find itself short of the necessary amount of wheat with which to feed its inhabitants within a very few years, and by the year 1931, so far as the staff of life is concerned, famine will stare us in the face. The remedy is to be found, not by increasing the area of wheat-growing soil, but by making the ground more productive than it at present is. In Denmark the yield of wheat is 41.8 bushels per acre, while in Australasia it is only about one-seventh of that amount—the average yield of all countries being about twelve and a half bushels per acre. If the yield for the whole world can be raised to twenty bushels, mankind can rest in the assurance of plenty for a long period of time. Experimental farming by Sir John Lawes and Sir Henry Gilbert has long ago conclusively proved that by scientific study of plant foods and their application to the soil the

yield of a field can be increased a great deal more than an hundredfold. The chief of these foods is nitrogen, in the form of nitrate of soda; and Sir William Crookes points out that although this natural product is not inexhaustible, it can be manufactured by electrical process. By this process, supposing that the power of Niagara were employed in providing the necessary energy, enough nitrate of soda could be obtained to supply the world's wants at less cost than it can now be brought from Chili. There is also another source of nitrogen which at present we throw into the sea and waste: possibly long before the year 1931 some satisfactory means may have been discovered of so treating the sewage of our large towns that it can profitably be used for enriching the soil. The electrical production of nitrate for agricultural purposes was discussed in the article on 'Cordite' in this *Journal* for August 3, 1895.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD ONES.

For more than three hundred years a light has been shown at Tynemouth Castle for the guidance of mariners entering the river. At first it took the form of a wood or coal fire, and it was not until the present century that this blazing beacon was replaced by a battery of oil-lamps

with reflectors, which, until the other day, shied their light from a square tower which for long has been a conspicuous landmark. Owing to the need of defensive works on the spot, and seeing that other lights have been established in the neighbourhood, it was decided to do away with this old beacon, and to set up in its stead a modern lighthouse on an island about three and a half miles to the northward. This new lighthouse has now been finished, and as it is fitted with the latest improvements, it presents a great contrast to the beacon which it has superseded. The dioptric illuminating apparatus, a mass of glass and gun-metal weighing between three and four tons, floats in a bath of quicksilver, so that it can freely revolve with as little friction as possible; indeed, the touch of a finger is sufficient to make it turn in its bath two or three times. The light shows two powerful flashes at intervals of twenty seconds, and in clear weather will be visible for a distance of seventeen miles.

ILLUMINATED BUOYS.

Another form of beacon for mariners, of smaller dimensions but hardly less important, is the illuminated buoy. These floating lamp-holders, placed in an estuary where the available channel is often only a narrow one bounded by mud or sandbanks only a few feet below the surface of the water, are invaluable to shipping. Hitherto the illuminant chiefly employed has been compressed gas, necessitating a high-pressure reservoir and compressing machinery. Mr Wigham, whose name has long been known in connection with lighthouse apparatus, has introduced a mineral oil lamp which can be fitted to any existing buoy, and will burn for a long period at very small cost. The maintenance of one form of lamp can be kept up at a cost of one penny for twenty-four hours, and as no compressing machinery is required, this is the only expense, plus the original cost of the lamp. The approach to a port—such as that of Liverpool, for instance, where a ship has to enter through a long avenue of buoys—could by this invention be almost as well lighted as a city street.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

The 'Northern dawn,' or 'Merry dancers,' as they call it in the Shetland Islands and some other places, is a phenomenon which is very seldom seen in the south of England—so seldom, indeed, that when it does occur it is not recognised by the multitude, who attribute the appearance to 'search-lights' or some other mundane cause. On the 9th of September last the northern sky was lit up by an aurora which was plainly seen over the whole of southern England, and formed a most beautiful display. It was almost free from colour, but the light was strong enough to enable one to note the time by an ordinary watch. It is noteworthy that the display did

not come altogether as a surprise, because for some days an unusually large sun-spot had been observed, and it is well known that bright auroræ very often make their appearance when these spots are passing the central meridian of the sun's disc. The spot in question was estimated to measure 15,000 miles in diameter, an area large enough to cover four globes the size of our earth. It could be plainly seen with the eye alone through a protective screen of smoked glass.

A CHEMICAL FIRE-EXTINGUISHER.

According to an American technical journal, aqua ammonia—i.e. the common liquid ammonia to be obtained at the oil-shops—forms a most efficient fire-extinguisher, and several instances are given of its power to arrest incipient conflagration. In one case a pile of cotton seed, several tons in weight, had caught fire, probably spontaneously—the centre of the mass resembling a solid body of live-coal. This was at once put out by the emptying upon the pile of half-a-gallon of ammonia. In another case the vapour from a tank of gasoline caught fire in a laundry, the room being filled with flame. The fire was at once annihilated by throwing into the room a bottle containing a gallon and a half of ammonia, procured from a chemist's shop which happily was situated next door. The chemist, in reporting the matter, stated that the effect was instantaneous, the flames giving place to torrents of black smoke, and in a moment every trace of fire was gone. The most surprising feature of the occurrence is that the tank of gasoline remained intact, although the vapour from it was the initial cause of the outbreak.

THE CONQUEST OF THE AIR.

A French journal recently published an illustrated description of a new flying-machine, designed by M. Ader and called the 'Avion.' This machine has been constructed under the auspices of, and with the help of subsidies from, the French War Department, and although it broke down at its first trial through the occurrence of an unexpected squall, it showed plainly before that catastrophe stopped its career that it had the power of rising from the ground. The huge machine has the appearance of a bat, and carries in front two propellers, which are worked by steam-engines of immense power but light weight. The wings are merely intended to support the apparatus in the air, and do not flap like those of a bird, but they are movable at the shoulder, in order that the centre of gravity of the machine can be modified as required. The entire machine is built up of bamboo fibre and steel wires, and the inventor claims that he has adopted a principle which has not been recognised by other aspirants in the same field. He has noted that in the wings of birds, of bats, and of insects the

spiral form is always found, and that nature in the structure of wings never departs from that principle, which he believes constitutes the basis of *aërostation*. The wrecked machine is now in order once more, and it is hoped that the French military authorities will once more sanction experiments which will decide whether it will fly or not.

ELECTRIC TRACTION.

London has now its second underground electric railway, and it represents a great improvement upon the first. The new line runs from the Mansion House to Waterloo Station, a mile and a half away on the south side of the Thames. The carriages are commodious and comfortable, and the whole of the line, which embraces two tunnels, one for the up and the other for the down traffic, is lighted by electric lamps sunk into the tunnel walls. The air of these tunnels is cool and perfectly pure, for each train draws with it a fresh supply; and, of course, there are no stifling products of combustion to deal with, as in the first underground railway, where steam locomotives are used. Other electric lines are in progress, so that in a short time London will be pierced by tunnels in every direction. In this way the constantly increasing difficulties owing to congested street traffic will at last find a remedy.

A NEW MATCH.

As the satisfactory outcome of experiments which have been in progress for some time past at the French government match factories at Pantin, the object of which has been to produce a lucifer-match without the employment of phosphorus, a match has been invented which it is believed will meet every requirement needed, while at the same time its manufacture, from the absence of phosphorus in its composition, will not induce that terrible necrosis of which we have lately heard so much in connection with our own factories. No information is given as to the price at which the new match can be placed on the market, and unfortunately cost has a great deal more to do with the adoption of any new thing than the consideration of any benefit which may accrue to makers or consumers; but we presume that the match will compete in price favourably with the old one. It is said to ignite with ease and certainty on being rubbed on any rough surface.

MOUNTAIN SICKNESS.

In a recent lecture by Dr Arthur Neve, in which he described his travels in Kashmir and little Tibet, some valuable information was given as to difficulty of breathing experienced by mountaineers at high altitudes. Dr Neve states that he found that if more than 8000 feet or 10,000 feet are traversed in a day, the traveller

is almost sure to suffer from mountain sickness; but if the ascent is made with greater deliberation no inconvenience is experienced. His party therefore made it a rule to encamp on their way towards a mountain-top in order that they might get acclimatised, and they found that, although the mercurial pressure was getting comparatively low, their breathing maintained its usual rate. So thoroughly did Dr Neve get accustomed to the rarefied air that at a height considerably over 20,000 feet he was able to take eighty paces to the minute without feeling any untoward results from the exertion.

A REGISTER OF OLD LONDON.

Although our British metropolis has been greatly improved during the past half-century, both as regards sanitation and architectural beauty, the cost, in the loss of many picturesque features and buildings of historic interest, has been very great. Builders, speculators, vestries, and those who have to do with this exchange of new things for old rather pride themselves upon having no sentimental feeling about relics of past times and past phases of life, and these have too often been swept away without a regret. Happily this will be so no longer. Some years ago the late William Morris organised a society to protect ancient buildings, and in connection with this society a committee was appointed for the purpose of compiling a register of old things worth preserving, and beauty-spots liable to be defaced within an area comprising a large part of greater London. It may be a building, an open space, a beautiful tree, or even a signboard. The item, whatever it be, is catalogued, and its description is accompanied by careful plans, drawings, and photographs. More than this, the committee have obtained the recognition of the London County Council, and the outcome of this is that a permanent body has been appointed to make a register or list of buildings of historic or architectural interest. It is still more satisfactory to learn that by an act passed this session the Council has acquired power to purchase or provide for the maintenance of buildings or places which come under the same description.

ICE FOR DOMESTIC USE.

Although demand is supposed to stimulate supply, especially when that demand assumes the form of necessity, the want is not always met as readily as we should expect it to be. During the recent hot weather, for example, when men were struck down by heat apoplexy, there has been a constant demand for ice which has not been at all adequately responded to. The best hotels, of course, have their regular supply of ice, and some thousands of tons are brought to the metropolis, or manufactured there, every week. But what is wanted is a retail house-to-house supply of the article in small quantities and at

a moderate price, such as the inhabitants of some of the Continental towns and cities enjoy. Such a branch of trade attached to any of our large supply stores, or started as an independent industry, would speedily attain large proportions, and would pay well. At present a householder who requires a small quantity of ice does not know where to get it, unless as a favour he obtains it, rough and of doubtful quality, from the fishmonger. We suppose that we may thank the extreme variability of our climate for the circumstance that an industry of this kind has not long ago been established here.

WINDMILLS.

It will possibly surprise many persons to learn that windmills are coming into extended use, for it is not uncommon to see a structure of the kind in a ruinous state and destitute of sails. But that is true only of the old-fashioned wooden erection, the new mill, which is finding such favour, being an improved contrivance made of steel, and wheel-like in general appearance. The new mill is used chiefly for irrigation purposes, pumping water so that it may be either stored or at once distributed over the land according to requirements. Recent extended experiments show that although the wind is proverbially a fickle agent to depend upon, it will do a great deal of work in the course of a year; and as it is a free labourer, there is a great attraction in its employment. These experiments were made with a sixteen-foot geared windmill at the agricultural station of Wisconsin, the windmill or engine being attached to pumps of different size and pattern according to the strength of the breeze, and a tank which contained a measured quantity of water, which emptied itself every hour. The total quantity of water pumped in one year was sufficient to cover seventy-nine acres to a depth of one foot. During a large portion of the time the wind was not strong enough to turn the mill, and the time for which it was actually in motion works out at 14-32 hours per day. It will thus be seen that the agriculturist has here a valuable worker, but one who must be allowed to rest as often as he pleases to do so. The possibilities of this motive-power were considered in the article, 'The Wasted Wind,' published in our issue for March 19, 1898.

OLD-AGE PENSIONS.

The late Mr George Holloway, M.P. for Stroud, at one time a member of the parliamentary commission on 'Old-Age Pensions,' said that if the thing was to be done at all the thrifty members of the community must do it for themselves. Mr Holloway's scheme, as carried out at Stroud, has proved a valuable object-lesson to the community; and, as already described in the article on 'Old-Age Pensions' in *Journal* for August 20, 1898, has been adopted with some improvements

at Tunbridge Wells. In 1896 the membership of this latter society was 1561, at the beginning of this year it had increased to 2500, and new centres are now and again being established. The objects are thoroughly utilitarian and praiseworthy, being the relief of members during sickness and infirmity, the provision of medical attendance and medicine, the securing of a sum of money to be paid during old age and for funeral expenses of a member's wife, as well as the assistance of distressed members. For the benefit of numerous inquirers, we may mention that the address of the chief secretary of the Tunbridge Wells society is Mr R. Kember, 69 Calverley Road, Tunbridge Wells.

SONG.

FLY not, summer—fly not yet,
Though the winter chilly
Touch with frosty finger-tips
Hollyhock and lily.

Butterflies sip nectar still
From the hearts of roses;
On the sunflower's golden disc
Still the bee reposes.

Fly not, summer-time of youth!
Fain we'd have thee linger,
Though grim Age may beckon us
With a trembling finger.

Yet—farewell, O sunny days
Bright with love and laughter;
Rainbows span the distant years,
Joys return—Hereafter.

M. L. ADDEY.

READY DECEMBER 1, 1898.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

CHRISTMAS PART, Price 1/.

Containing Articles and complete Stories by—

J. ARTHUR BARRY,

Mrs MOLESWORTH,

CHARLES EDWARDES,

W. E. CULE, &c.

The December part completes the volume of
Chambers's Journal for 1898.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND:

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

By W. E. CULLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE Bishop of Hexminster is at the present time the most popular prelate in the United Kingdom. His benignity, his sympathy, and his ability to put himself into another's place invariably gain for him the warm regard of his associates, while his kindness and consideration have made him adored by all his servants. He is, in fact, a model gentleman, a perfect bishop.

His popularity has not always been so great. A year or two ago his sympathies were not as warm as they are now. His judgments of other men were more severe; he was apt to be dogmatic on moral points. Yet very few of those who rejoice at the change are aware that it dates from his last visit to the Stallands, and that it is closely connected with the brief but mysterious disappearance of Lady Stalland's diamond.

It was the evening of his arrival, and he stood upon the hearthrug in the drawing-room. A little girl was sitting upon the rug almost at his feet. He had come downstairs after dressing for dinner, to find her the only occupant of the room, and had entered into conversation.

'And what are you doing, my dear?' he asked, after the first questions had been answered.

'I'm playing,' said the child seriously.

'That's very nice,' was the Bishop's smiling remark. 'But what are you playing?'

'I'm playing diamonds. Look at them.'

The Bishop looked. In the chubby pink hand extended to him he saw some half-dozen diamond-shaped pieces of glass. He did not examine them.

'They's not *weal* diamonds,' the child went on half-confidentially; 'but I'm making believe they are. That's just as good.'

'Indeed?' said the Bishop, with another smile.

'Yes, just as good. Do you ever make-believe at all, youself?'

Again the Bishop smiled. 'I—I don't know,' he replied kindly. 'But I don't think I do.'

'Don't you ever make-believe you's a piwut? That's what Cousin Bertie mostly does. Or p'waps you like best to be a sleeping beauty, or a king, or a wobber?'

'Well, no. I haven't tried any of those,' he replied, with increased amusement.

'Why don't you, then?' said the lady of diamonds persistently. 'It's splendid to make-believe you's a piwut. I often does it, and I go and get lots of things from ev'rywhere. Piwuts and wobbers do, 'cause Bertie said so.'

'That's good fun,' said the Bishop. 'Do you put the things back afterwards?'

The dark curls shook merrily. 'Sometimes I forget,' was the whispered answer.

'That's good fun too,' declared the Bishop, most immorally; and then there was a pause in the conversation.

The 'diamonds' glittered brightly under the light from the window as they were tossed carelessly from one little hand to another. Then they were all thrown up together, falling with a soft *thud, thud, thud* upon the carpet. The pink hands promptly began to collect them, counting and recounting them once and again.

The Bishop watched smilingly. Then his eye fell upon something which lay glittering in the silky hair of a rug near that on which he stood. There was no mistaking the object. It was one of the 'diamonds.'

It must have rolled to that distance after the last throw. The counting was going on briskly. 'One, two, three, four, five, six. One, two, three.' The curly head was bent low. He moved softly until he was just within reach of the unnoticed prize. It was an impulse of mischief.

'One, two, three, four, five, six!' The Bishop stooped with remarkable celerity and stretched out

his hand. He was back in an instant, and had only just resumed his old position when the little face was turned.

'Well,' he asked innocently, 'are they all there?'

'I'll count again,' answered the child. 'But I think they's all here. One, two, three, four, five'—

The Bishop actually chuckled. His chuckle was such an audible one that for a moment the counting was suspended, and the counter listened suspiciously. He immediately looked as grave and harmless as possible.

'I beg your pardon, my lord.'

It was a footman bearing a lamp. The Bishop moved, and the man placed his burden in a recess. He kept his head bent, but could not entirely conceal his features.

'Martin!' said the Bishop sharply.

The man looked up. There was something of shame in the movement.

'You here?' said the Bishop in a tone of displeased surprise. 'You here?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered the footman.

The man's face had flushed uncomfortably, and the Bishop had entirely lost his usually benign expression. This Martin was a man who had been dismissed his service three years ago for an act of dishonesty, and such a sudden meeting was decidedly awkward.

'Have you been here long?' he inquired at last.

'Ten months, my lord,' answered Martin.

The Bishop's next question was of a more delicate character. He took his eyes from the man's face and allowed them to rest upon the curly locks of the child at his feet. She was still counting steadily—'One, two, three, four, five, six!'

'Does your master—does Sir Edward know?'

Martin shook his head. 'No—no, my lord,' he stammered. 'He does not know.'

'Hem!' said the Bishop.

'The truth is, my lord,' the man continued eagerly—the truth is that I—I've turned over a new leaf. Since I left your service there has been nothing—nothing at all wrong.'

'Hem!' said the Bishop again; and the child's murmur was heard once more—'Four, five, six—four, five, six!'

'And I hope, my lord,' concluded Martin, fear and shame distinct in his voice—'I hope that you will not—that you will not think it necessary to—to'—

He paused and waited anxiously. The Bishop's face had cleared, but it was not exactly pleasant in expression. His friends at that time often regretted that the severity of his views of other men's failings frequently compelled him to do a gracious deed ungraciously. It was the case now.

'Well, Martin,' he said, with visible stiffness, 'I am pleased to know that you have changed—that you have turned—and I trust that you will not

fall again. Under the circumstances, of course, I shall not mention the past. Do your best to deserve my confidence. That will do now—that will do.'

'Thank you, my lord,' said the footman humbly; and he silently left the room.

For the time the Bishop forgot his companion in pleasant contemplation of his own leniency. He was awakened by a sudden question:

'Is Martin a wobbler too? I never thought he was.'

'My child!' cried the Bishop. 'My dear child!'

'Well, that's nothing,' said the child, rising and looking directly into his face. 'That's nothing. Ev'wybody goes and plays wobbler sometimes—ev'wybody.'

The Bishop was startled by this shocking pronouncement, and not a little dismayed by the language in which it was uttered. The encounter with Martin had quite driven from his mind all thought of what had occurred previously, so that the child's meaning was lost to him, and he took no heed of the peculiar look of intelligence in her dancing eyes; and at that moment a rustling of skirts on the stairs, mingled with a murmur of voices, interrupted their conversation. The little one gathered her belongings hastily together and ran out through the conservatory. He smiled at her abrupt departure, and prepared to welcome the first-comer in that easy manner which was one of the most familiar of his many personal gifts.

During dinner he sat next to his hostess, Lady Stalland. On his other side was Mrs Digby, an elderly lady who had secretly begged for the place because 'the dear Bishop's conversation was so improving.' Lady Stalland was quiet and charming, but Mrs Digby was neither, for she raked up every debatable question she could think of, in order to obtain, for future quotation, the Bishop's opinion upon it. One of her questions bore upon a notorious case of 'misappropriation' in the morning papers.

'It is a shocking affair,' said Mrs Digby, with unction. 'Don't you think so?'

'Very shocking,' answered the Bishop, without hesitation. 'Very shocking indeed!'

Lady Stalland took up the matter on the other side. She was inclined to reserve judgment.

'I do not know,' she said mildly. 'I think—I think we should wait to know all the circumstances. It may not be as bad as it seems.'

'Oh,' cried Mrs Digby, greatly fortified by the Bishop's opinion, 'I think the dear Bishop is quite right. He—the man—was using and keeping what did not belong to him. That is theft.'

She glanced at the Bishop for support.

'Yes,' he said, in that dogmatic manner which was so soon to disappear entirely. 'Yes, I think so, Mrs Digby. Circumstances must not be pleaded in excuse. We must face these facts firmly. That is theft.'

So the Bishop settled the question, and Lady

Stalland could say no more. It was then that Sir Edward addressed her from the other side.

'My dear,' he said quietly, 'what is wrong with your bracelet?'

Lady Stalland glanced at her arm. Her face paled, and a startled look came into her eyes.

The bracelet she wore was a heavy one of chased gold, and formed the setting for a remarkably large and beautiful diamond. But now the diamond was gone, and the socket in which it had rested was ugly in its emptiness.

'It must have fallen out,' said Sir Edward.

Lady Stalland instinctively pushed back her chair and shook the folds of her dress. The conversation at the foot of the table ceased for no apparent reason, and a silence fell. In a moment the loss was known to all, and the silence was broken by a chorus of suggestions.

'It may have been left upstairs,' said one voice questioningly.

Lady Stalland tried to recollect. 'No,' she said. 'It could not have fallen there, or I should have heard it. And I did not remove the bracelet while dressing. And, now I remember, I thought I heard something fall while I was sitting in the drawing-room this afternoon.'

'Ah!' cried Sir Edward. 'Then it must be there now.'

'Yes,' answered his wife. 'And I know exactly where it happened. I will go and look myself.'

She rose, smiling, and left the table. In the few minutes of her absence conversation flowed on in the new channel.

'Such a lovely stone,' whispered Mrs Digby to the Bishop. 'Sir Edward brought it from India. It was part of the plunder of Delhi, and is valued at'—

'How much?' inquired the Bishop in surprise.

'Ten thousand pounds,' repeated Mrs Digby a little more distinctly.

'Dear me!' the Bishop murmured. 'Dear me! It was not large either, if I recollect.'

The lady smiled. 'Large for a diamond,' she said almost reprovingly. 'But what is that footman looking at?'

The Bishop raised his eyes, and found that Martin, from behind a chair at the other side of the table, was gazing at him in a strange and peculiar manner. The look was averted instantly, and before he could even express his surprise at the incident Lady Stalland had returned.

There were signs of agitation in the very rustle of her skirts. Sir Edward's look was a question quickly answered.

'I have not found it,' she reported nervously. 'It is not where I thought; and I have searched the whole floor.'

Again a silence fell—a silence of constraint and discomfort. The baronet, however, affected

to treat the matter lightly, though his face belied his words.

'It cannot be lost,' he said with quickness. 'There is no need for fear—no need at all. Let us go on in peace. We shall find it afterwards.'

Lady Stalland sat down and the dinner proceeded. Gradually the restraint passed away, though the conversation entirely failed to leave the channel into which it had been so suddenly thrown. It passed through many stories of mysterious disappearances and equally mysterious recoveries, returning at last to the present case.

'It has slipped into some unsuspected corner probably,' suggested Commander Digby. 'The danger is that it may have been, or may be, picked up by some one utterly ignorant of its nature and value.'

'Both facts will soon be known,' answered Sir Edward abruptly; 'even if they are not known already. But I believe that every member of the household does know them.'

A hard, clear voice spoke from the foot of the table, where Mr Dallis, an eminent member of the Bar, had been quietly attending to the duties before him.

'In that case,' he said, 'we need not be troubled. Ignorance here would be a serious danger; knowledge is the best security. The stone is certain to return.'

The Bishop was the next to speak. 'By the way,' he remarked thoughtfully, 'I believe I was the first to come downstairs this evening.'

'Very suspicious fact,' interrupted Mr Dallis gravely. 'A very suspicious fact.'

'And I certainly did not see anything of the diamond,' concluded the Bishop, smiling. 'Therefore I must plead "Not guilty."'

During the laughter which followed, the Bishop of Hexminster happened once more to catch sight of a face whose expression startled him considerably. It was Martin's face again, and the man's look was one of horror, amazement, and fear—the look of a person who can scarcely credit his own hearing, yet is dismayed beyond measure by what he has heard.

The smile died away from the Bishop's face as a dreadful suspicion occurred to him. He was not good at reading expressions, but he could not be mistaken this time. He took no further part in the talk, and there was portentous gravity in his countenance when the gentlemen left their wine to join the ladies in an anxious search for the still-missing diamond.

It was Martin who stood at the door as they passed out. The Bishop gazed into the man's face searchingly, seriously, full of suspicion, yet full of doubt. Then he spoke in a low tone:

'Follow me to the library.'

STORY-READING AND STORY-WRITING.

By Mrs MOLESWORTH.

To serve . . .
 . . . The children I am here.
 It is the children's bread I break;
 He trusts me with it for their sake.

JEAN INGELOW.



O judge fairly, to appreciate fully great changes or developments, they require to be viewed in considerable extent. Day after day, month after month, year after year pass on, leaving us often unconscious of the slow but sure work they are accomplishing, till, perhaps suddenly, some accident or incident, often but trivial, leads us to look back ten years, twenty, half a century even, to realise the changes that have been evolving themselves; and in no department of human interests, it seems to me, is this more true than in that of literature of every kind.

It is only of a very modest, but nevertheless far from unimportant, branch of our national literature that I feel myself in any way competent to speak—that of fiction for children. Fully twenty years of 'story-telling' to the young have done more than furnish me with personal experience in this direction. They have led me to think much on the subject; to look back as well as forward; to estimate more or less accurately the past as well as the present position and influence of fiction on children's minds and characters.

Of course in the old days, and not such very remote 'old days' after all, the number of story-books was almost inconceivably smaller; nevertheless it is to be doubted if their influence was proportionately so. My own belief on the subject, culled from my childish memories, is opposed to this. On the contrary, I am strongly inclined to think that in those days my compeers and I 'took in' the stories we read as do but seldom the boys and girls of the present time. For we studied them—we 'inwardly digested' and assimilated them. The gilt-edged, blue or scarlet volumes which we thought so attractive, costing three or four times what a really well-got-up story-book costs nowadays—though the illustrations were, as a rule, atrocious, and the whole affair what would be considered vulgar and 'inartistic' in the extreme—were not only devoured with enthusiasm, but read over and over again as a matter of course, till the characters and scenes became a reality to us, actual factors in our own existence and experience. And this effect was increased and strengthened by another peculiarity arising from the limited number of our works of fiction. We—for I was one of a party of brothers and sisters at home—and our companions all read the same stories, and talked them over together much more exhaustively than is possible now,

when 'publications for the young' are issued by hundreds and more yearly.

We were not perhaps such acute critics as the small people of the present day—indeed, strictly speaking, I do not think we presumed to criticise at all. We knew what books—still more, what personages described in them—we liked, and we knew which we disliked, but I rarely remember speaking of any story as 'dull' or 'stupid' or 'not worth reading.' We had more deference, if not reverence, in some ways, and I think printed matter was one of the things that it did not occur to us to pass judgment upon. For, to begin with, as I have said, books cost so much. Well do I recollect the slow hoarding of weekly pence or sixpences before the necessary amount was attained for the purchase of some coveted volume. Once in particular I recollect a certain green-and-gold story-book in a shop-window, which I had set my heart upon, and my terror of some day finding it gone from its place (for somehow it never struck me that another copy could be procured) before I was rich enough to make it mine.

What were our, or my, favourites among the story-books of 'then'? Let me recall a few; indeed, I can recall several belonging to an older generation, and an older still—those not only of my mother, but of my grandmother. Some actually the self-same volumes treasured all those years ago by the then little hands, long since resting in the grave—their life-work over; some, copies or new editions procured with difficulty for us by my mother, and in certain cases, I fear, less appreciated by us than her perhaps too partial remembrance of the favourites of her own childhood (or of her mother's) had led her to expect. Among these the most prominent were *The Fairchild Family*, by Mrs Sherwood; one or two of Mrs Hoffman's; *The Twin-Sisters*, published, I think, anonymously; *Ornaments Discovered*, also by an unnamed author; and last, but not least, a complete collection of Miss Edgeworth's books for the young.

These, as I have said, we read over and over again. I think, on the whole, *The Fairchild Family* interested me the most, though I was conscious even then of some inward revolt against the forcedness of the religious, and even moral, teaching it strove to impart. No such objection could be brought against the far abler work of Maria Edgeworth, but nevertheless I missed something in these stories—a lack of sentiment, possibly of sentimentality only! They seemed to me hard, but slightly, if at all, sympathising; though the stories contained in *The Parent's Assistant* and in *Moral Tales* were thoroughly

interesting, even appealing to the dramatic instinct inherent in all intelligent children.

Among the books of this epoch—that of my mother's childhood—there were, if I mistake not, but few fairy-tales. But by a generation farther back these seem to have been appreciated. There was one perfectly delicious fat little brown volume which we looked upon as an inexhaustible treasury of delight, handed down to us from the end of the last century. I cannot recall the exact title, and the book itself I have never seen again, but it contained *all* the dear old stories and some that are now forgotten, told in the true narrative style, minus moral aphorisms or 'lectures,' though it would have been a curiously stupid or unreflective child who did not glean from its pages the old, old, sturdy summing-up of the lessons of life—that, take things as a whole, goodness triumphs.

The story-books of my own day were, however, those whose influence was the greatest, whose interest was the most enthralling. *The Wide, Wide World* entranced me, especially the first part, where the little heroine's devotion to her mother is so pathetically described. It is difficult for me even now to read of Ellen's shopping expeditions without tears. I cannot endorse the criticism of present-day readers of this once favourite tale, that it is full of weak and unreal sentiment, the hero a prig of the first water, the heroine an impossible little personage. There may be a good deal of truth in this opinion; nevertheless I cannot bring myself to see it—woman-like, very probably, I cannot because I will not; and partly, too, because I remember with too much gratitude the many hours of intense enjoyment I owe to it. Yes, I think I loved it better than any other story-book!

Others which left a lastingly pleasing impression on me were Miss Sewell's earlier works—*Laetion Parsonage* in particular, perhaps because it was the first of them I read. Then came the delight of Miss Yonge's books, which seemed to me to open a new world of fiction, as indeed they did, especially, I think, the 'historical' ones. And the children of my day were very favoured as regards fairy-tales. Grimm and, still more, Hans Andersen were a library in themselves; and among less well-known books which I cannot but associate with the 'fairy-tale' department were Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, and a little later Kingsley's *Heroes*. There was an older book, too, a translation from the German, that I have never been able to procure in the complete original, *The Nutcracker of Nuremberg*, which the brother to whom it belonged and I myself found unspeakably fascinating. Charles Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* was one of our 'best-read' books, I remember, though it, of course, was originally of an earlier date.

After all, even as regards quantity, we were not so badly off! The wealth of the Waverley

Novels too was, with the exception of one or two among them, open to us; and immense was the pleasure we extracted from them, though an episode in my earlier childhood I have never been allowed to forget. I was found one day dissolved in tears in one of my usual dens for reading—a tiny book-room in an uncle's country-house—on my knees before a sofa whereon lay *Peveril of the Peak*; and when cross-questioned as to the cause of my tears, I had to own that it was because I 'couldn't' understand the story; it got so muddled after the beginning. And *Ivanhoe* and *The Talisman*, and even *Anne of Geierstein*, were so much nicer and easier.' I think this incident warned my elders and betters that the run of a library even to a baby such as I was—for I was only six years old—is not always the most judicious thing to allow.

But few children of the present generation, I fear, are attracted by the dear Waverleys. There are, in my humble opinion—though I advance it with some trepidation, being keenly conscious how the tables might be turned upon myself—there are far too many children's books nowadays. And in scores of nurseries and school-rooms, a book, once hurried through, practically ceases to exist save as an ornament on the shelves, or in exceptional circumstances, such as a hopelessly rainy day or illness confining the little people to the house, to be taken out of its nest with discontented condescension and run through again, because Fred or Dolly has 'nothing else to do.' Apropos of this, an anecdote I heard, or possibly read, the other day—in which latter case I apologise for repeating it—recurs to me. A little girl on a certain birthday—her tenth or twelfth—was presented by, I think, her godmother with a beautiful Bible. The child viewed the gift with complacency as regarded the binding and outward appearance of the book, but with a certain shadow of disappointment in her eyes which the donor was quick to perceive.

'I hope you like it, dear?' she said inquiringly.

'Oh yes,' was the reply. 'It's very nice. Thank you very much. It was only—*perhaps* I'd rather have had another book, for I've read all this one already'!

Are there two sides to this state of things? To the never re-reading a once-perused story-book, I mean. There are two—often more—sides to most questions in this world, and I doubt if the present case is an exception. It is not only the quantity but the quality of the present-day fiction for the young that is at fault. And in saying this I really refer to children's books, not to the sensational, unwholesome literature which, I am sorry to find, the carelessness of some parents or guardians allows boys and girls to read, especially in the serials with which our tables are overwhelmed. Few authors succeed in *really* interesting their young audience. Children

hurry through the books eagerly to get hold of the plot, of how 'it ends;' it is comparatively rarely that they grow to love or care for the characters of those they read about. Not, of course, that 'plot,' even a certain amount of excitement, is to be objected to by any means, but, as a rule, it should be subservient to the delineation, the almost unconsciously imbibed knowledge of the human beings of the drama. And in many cases this deficiency springs from the want of thorough sympathy with the undeveloped—or, rather, developing—mind of childhood on the part of the writer. There is a wild idea afloat that an embryo author may test his—or, far more frequently, *her*—powers if a *début* in writing is made by first doing so for the young.

'Some simple little story for children' is the phrase. And unluckily the 'simple little story,' not ill-written, with a good deal of smartness about it very likely, not seldom gets published and gets read, or scampered through, without the child reader's lasting interest being touched at all, and is then, as I have said, relegated to the bookshelves and forgotten. Does it deserve to be remembered?

Of course, these remarks are to be taken with certain reservations. They are not to be applied to stories distinctly of adventure, well thought out, often masterpieces of their kind, for which I have a hearty admiration as very wholesome reading for girls as well as for boys.

But real writing for children, modest as it sounds—and, as I am the very first to own, a small thing, a tiny achievement as it is among the magnificent triumphs of literature—is yet a *different* thing, almost a different art, from that of writing for adults. One has to place one's self in so many almost conflicting positions. It is necessary to become, in some sense, a child again, in the first place; to see through child-eyes; to hear with child-ears—above all, to feel with child-heart. Yet, at the back of all this, one must retain one's own older experience, wider grasp, and greater wisdom—greater knowledge of evil, alas! as well as, it is to be hoped, of good. For there is so much to be *avoided* in one's work for the young. All suggestion of many of the sadder facts of our complex human nature, which, though learnt they must be when the boy and girl become man and woman, it would be cruel as well as sinful to teach prematurely; all elements of suspiciousness, of distrustfulness of others—above all, of those whom our darlings naturally look up to and revere; all painting in too gloomy colours of this life, sorrow-burdened, even almost hopelessly tragic as it often seems to us—till, as the 'eventide' approaches, with a wonderful return to the faithful child-nature, we come to believe again in the 'light' as the reality—all these rocks and shoals of danger and injury must be steered clear of with perfect skill. For 'humbug' in any form is quickly detected by children; many points

a child's story-teller must be content to evade, simply to leave untouched upon, never to tell untruths about.

And this leads me to mention what I am almost afraid may seem a 'fad,' so often have I had occasion to allude to it—namely, the distinction, the most important distinction, which should be drawn between writing *about* and writing *for* children. It is strange that parents or those who have the direction of children's reading should be so blind to this. In the preface to Miss Montgomery's beautiful *Misunderstood*, it is most clearly pointed out, and the very title of the book emphasises the intention with which it was written; yet I venture to say there is scarcely a child of a certain class in England into whose hands it has not been given! And I have actually heard people say it was 'morbid' and 'too melancholy' for children! It was never *meant* for them.

Other books, among them some of Mrs Ewing's exquisite and inimitable tales, seem to me open to the same warning. Children should not be saddened before their time, while yet, on the other hand, they should not be deceived. In this, as in most questions of the kind, there is a *via media*, which it is perhaps one of the special gifts of a writer for children to discover. We want to brace, not to discourage; to make our readers thoughtful, to eliminate self-conceit and self-satisfaction, without fostering any approach to morbid introspection. There are books—I could name several—especially books for boys, in which none of the characters are children, none of the scenes those of the nursery or school-room, which are better, more wholesome reading than others I could also name, peopled almost entirely by small personages, and dwelling principally on their sayings and doings.

Another quicksand to be avoided is the introduction, by way of heightening the interest and sensation of a story, of any *frightening* element. Unless one knows children intimately, or recalls minutely the experiences of one's own childish days, it would be difficult to believe how even a bright, healthy child may be the victim of nervous terrors. The most sensitive are often the most reserved; partly, perhaps, from a not by any means contemptible feeling of pride, partly from that curious reticence of children, of which—for it often fades as they grow older and could themselves explain it—the root is difficult to discover. For you find it even in the happiest families, where dread of their elders is non-existent, where sympathy is very far from an unknown quantity. Yet, again, a touch of mystery, inseparable from true poetic feeling, is sometimes—often, indeed—a great additional charm to even a very simple story, and surely a true element in all education. We are not all 'mind,' any more than we are all 'body.' The training of the spirit as well as of the intellect and heart will go on for good—

alas! sometimes for ill—as long as life lasts; and, to an awe-inspiring extent, we, parents or in any sense guides or teachers of the young, should accept our tremendous responsibilities.

But, besides all the qualifications I have touched upon, there remains one which I can only describe by the homely word 'knack' in writing for children. What is it? What does it consist in? I cannot define it. 'Sympathy' may have a good deal to do with it; but there is some-

thing more—something more nearly described by the analogy of an ear for music, or the true painter's marvellous appreciation of colour, than by any description or analysis. And as to this, to descend to still more homely language, 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating.' Test your audience—a most candid and honest one—and you will not long be at a loss as to whether story-writing for children is, or is not, a gift that you possess.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

By P. L. M'DERMOTT.

CHAPTER IV.—A NEW FRIEND.



HAD Lily Warner given him one kind word of farewell, or shown herself in any way conscious of his existence, when she was leaving Coolgardie for England, the heart of Dicky Hulme would have been less full of bitterness. But, in truth, his heart was very bitter now against all the world; the memory of his mother, and of poor Jim Solus, and his gratitude to Mrs Brady, being the only softening influences that ever touched him.

As soon as he felt strong enough he shook the dust of the mining-camp from his feet for good, and started again for England. The voyage was without incident. But no wanderer ever turned homewards with a sadder heart. Homewards? He heard the passengers speaking of 'home,' and reckoning eagerly the distance run by the steamer since the day before, and calculating the date of their probable arrival in England. Their language only reminded him that now he had no 'home' to return to. Home was in the sad cemetery with his mother; and these melancholy thoughts, many a time by day and night, made him lean over the rail in some quiet part of the ship and drop tears into the sea as salt as its own water.

On arriving in London he found his money reduced to four pounds. He took a room in a coffee-house, where he could live cheaply. What to do next was a problem. There were, perhaps, two or three persons in London who might help him to some employment if he applied to them. But he had been very foolish to throw up his government appointment and waste his small resources in emigrating to Western Australia. He was ashamed to show himself to any person who had known him. His enterprise had been a most abject failure. Mortification was eating his heart away, and he resolved to starve in the streets rather than be recognised.

He was like enough to starve, as he realised after a few days of aimless wandering through

the streets and vain attempts to obtain employment through the medium of newspaper advertisements. What a mockery these advertisements of 'situations vacant' seemed to be! His applications for posts he was well fitted to fill were left unnoticed. He did not know that his successive disappointments were no bitterer or more disheartening than those of many others whose applications for the same situations met with the same fate.

His life during the three or four weeks which he spent on this melancholy quest was not quite a monotony of dull misery. But the variations were not cheerful. He went out once in the dusk of the evening to have a look at his old home—the cottage in which his mother died. Had it been closed up and deserted the sight would have corresponded well with his morbid state of feeling. Alas! it was lighted up and pleasant with the happy family-life of new tenants, who knew nothing of those who had been there before them, or of the homeless youth who was gazing at their pleasant windows across the road. A visit to his mother's grave in the cemetery was more solacing. He trimmed the grass and flowers above her resting-place, and it eased him to indulge in a good flow of tears.

When he returned to London, and was sitting dejectedly in the coffee-room, the landlady, noticing his looks, and compassionating a situation which she guessed to be very forlorn, good-naturedly offered him a ticket of admission to a neighbouring theatre. For exhibiting the bills in her window and shop she was occasionally presented with these orders by the management.

'It will be better than sitting here or walking about,' she said kindly.

Hulme thanked her and accepted the order, which admitted him to a lower gallery or amphitheatre. He felt no great interest in the play, but it was a welcome distraction from his troubles. The curtain rose and the piece proceeded; but

instead of attending to what went on upon the stage, Hulme's eyes wandered with vacant interest over the audience in the stalls and boxes who were visible from where he sat.

He gave a painful start, and his gaze, for the rest of the performance, was riveted upon one point in the stalls. He would not have believed, an hour ago, that the sight of Lily Warner could ever again affect him as it did now. He saw her in the stalls, with Mark Revel sitting next to her. How intently he watched every motion she made! In evening-dress she certainly looked very lovely—her beauty seemed to him to shine around her. He noticed, with a species of negative satisfaction, that she never once turned her face to Revel, even when he spoke to her. She seemed to tolerate rather than enjoy his society. Between the acts, too, he invariably went out; on these occasions she appeared to notice neither his going nor his returning. At last, when the play was over, Revel assisted her with her wraps and led her out. Hulme was there, among the crowd, and saw Revel hand her into a brougham and drive away with her.

It made Hulme very indignant against himself to feel his passion for this girl return with tenfold force to increase the bitterness of a condition already sufficiently bitter. He could not help it. That girl's power over his life was supreme. Of course she had not a thought of him now, and for a nature with a strong element of pride in it the reflection was humiliating. He could keep out of her way, at least; or, if by accident he should meet her, he felt confident he could command a stony composure of countenance that she should not fail to understand. It was poor comfort; but it was all he had.

Next day Hulme had an experience that was curious. He went into the City. It was wet, and he took an inside seat in an omnibus. Opposite to him sat a prosperous-looking middle-aged man, with bright hazel eyes and grizzled beard and moustache—a good-natured looking gentleman, who possessed a cheerful eye for every person and object at which he chanced to look. What attracted Hulme's attention to him was a very remarkable resemblance in his features to poor Jim Solus. Could Jim's face have been cleared of the sunburnt tinge, and the dust of the goldfields which had been embedded in it, it would, Hulme fancied, have been just such a face as that of the pleasant gentleman in the omnibus. The resemblance, of course, was only one of those accidental likenesses often met with; but it was so striking that Hulme kept his eyes, as unobtrusively as he could, on the man's face all the way to the Bank.

The gentleman alighted here, and so did Hulme. But while they waited for a minute or so to cross the street to the Mansion House, the gentleman suddenly turned round and looked him full in the face.

'Are you in business in the City?' he abruptly asked.

'No,' was the surprised answer. 'I am not in business anywhere, I am sorry to say. I have only recently returned from Western Australia.'

'Ha? Didn't strike any gold, then?'

'I struck typhoid,' said Hulme, with a smile, 'and lost a good friend. That was the extent of my luck, and I thought it wiser to come home again while I had money enough to pay my passage. I am beginning to doubt the wisdom of the step, unpromising as the goldfields looked.'

'How do you happen to know me, then? Where have you seen me before?'

The inquiry struck Hulme as an odd one, but it was easily answered.

'I certainly have never seen you before, sir, to my knowledge.'

'Because you were looking at me in the omnibus as if you knew me.'

'It was only on account of your great resemblance to a poor friend of mine in Western Australia—the friend I mentioned just now.'

'The friend you lost? What was his name?'

'They used to call him Jim Solus. His name was James Gaverick.'

'James Gaverick?' said the gentleman thoughtfully. 'And your own name—what is it?'

Hulme told him.

'I knew James Gaverick. I should like to hear something about him. Are you engaged just now? Would you mind coming down King William Street with me to my little office?'

Hulme accompanied him willingly. No further word was spoken until they had climbed two flights of stairs and entered a small front room. It looked little like an office. The table at which the gentleman seated himself after hanging up his hat and coat had not so much as an ink-bottle upon it. The room was bare, save for the few articles of plain furniture it contained. Neither book nor paper was to be seen.

An aged clerk came in from another room, carrying a newspaper in one hand and some open letters in the other.

'Not just yet, Mike,' said the gentleman; 'you can read them to me presently. I want to talk to this young gentleman.'

The clerk withdrew, and then Hulme received a surprise.

'Jim Gaverick is the name of my brother, Mr Hulme—my twin brother; so you see you were right in your guess.'

'I guessed nothing at all. Certainly I never dreamt I saw poor Jim's brother.'

'Poor Jim!' said Mr Gaverick. 'I have heard of his fate, so you needn't tell me. Before he started on that expedition he wrote to me for the last time. He told me about you, too.'

'About me?'

'Yes. Jim had a reason of his own for attaching himself to you. Poor old Jim! I wish he had never gone to Australia. But wishing is no good.'

'I shall never, while I live, forget his kindness to me, Mr Gaverick. When I was down with typhoid he gave his own house to me, and engaged a doctor and nurses to take care of me, and left money to provide everything for me that should be wanted. Then he went away to the bush.'

'Poor old Jim!'

Mr Gaverick stretched his legs, put his hands in his pockets, and gazed vacantly at the opposite wall for the space of a couple of minutes.

'Mr Hulme,' he said at length, 'I am heartily glad I have met you. If you want a place, I have one to offer you. I do a good deal of business, but I can neither read nor write.'

Hulme looked at him with wonder.

'I can make a sort of signature that stands for my name—that's all. Old Mike out there—many a year Mike and I have trudged along together, but the poor fellow is getting feeble now, and needs rest—old Mike reads my letters to me every morning, and then reads the business parts of the newspaper. That's how we start the day; later on Mike takes my instructions and writes any letters we want to send away. When I go home in the evening, after dinner, my old housekeeper—she's getting too old, also, and her sight is failing—reads the rest of the newspaper to me, and maybe a story out of a book. I am an old bachelor, you see,' he added, just a little wistfully, 'because, of course, a man that can neither read nor write could never ask any one to marry him. His wife would be always ashamed of him.'

Hulme was far from thinking so, but he did not express his thought.

'Now, Mr Hulme, do you think you would care to be an ignorant old chap's factotum—to read to him of an evening now and then, and come here with him every morning, and so relieve poor old Mike of further work? If you didn't care to live in the house with me and old Peggy, why, I could get a more cheerful place for you somewhere handy.'

The proposition, needless to say, was eagerly and gratefully accepted by Dicky Hulme. The darkest hour is just before the dawn. His horizon had been very dark and disheartening that morning, and now—how bright it looked!

The old man called Mike, when told by his master of the new arrangement, shook hands with Hulme and chuckled like a schoolboy getting away for a long holiday. To think he should not have to come to the City in the morning any more, but read his paper at his leisure after breakfast and then proceed to work in his garden, was a vision of paradise to the old man. And his monthly pension would come to

him as regularly as his monthly salary did now—it had all been arranged already. Old Mike was so tremendously happy that Mr Gaverick felt obliged to step out to his office and shake hands with him.

Mr Gaverick was not an inquisitive man, but, in response to the interest he took in Hulme, the latter told him, a few evenings after this, the history of his mother's ruin and of the pair of rascals who had caused it. Mr Gaverick was smoking a long clay pipe after dinner, and this occurred during an interval of reading the newspaper.

'I wonder,' observed Mr Gaverick, 'whether they have floated the mine yet. There's nothing about it in the paper?'

Hulme glanced over the columns of prospectuses, but saw nothing of it.

'We'll ask the lawyer to-morrow. He'll know. If they have, Dicky, I'll put you up to something.'

Mr Gaverick kept the matter in his mind, for when they went to the City next morning he called on his solicitor. Presently he came back with a paper in his hand.

'Here it is,' he said. 'Just read it out, Dicky, till we see what it is like.'

It was a copy of the prospectus of 'Revel's Find, Limited,' which had been issued nearly a month before. Hulme read the document with keen interest. The capital of the company was fixed at £120,000, and the purchase price was £90,000, payable as to £30,000 in cash, as much more in fully-paid shares, and the balance in cash or shares.

'Who are the directors?' Mr Gaverick asked.

'Major-General Grant, chairman.'

'Ah! he's an old stager. Well?'

'Colonel Jacob, C.B.,"' Hulme continued to read from the prospectus. 'Then come the vendors, "David Warner, Esquire," and "Mark Revel, Esquire," who are to join the board after allotment. I suppose, however, the allotment has been made before now, and the full board constituted. Do you know, Mr Gaverick, when I left Coolgardie there was a general opinion that they got this mine by foul-play of some sort? Revel was away less than a fortnight on a prospecting tour—the world knew he was utterly ignorant of the business—and he came back with this claim. My own private conviction has always been that he came upon the claim marked out by poor Jim.'

'Likely enough, likely enough,' was all the comment made by Mr Gaverick. 'I must get Braker'—this was his solicitor—'to find out how many shares the public have taken up in the concern. I want particularly to know.'

Then they went on with their daily business. Mr Gaverick was a tea merchant, and it was wonderful to Hulme how he was able to transact as much business as he did, and transact it

successfully, without being able to read or write. These deficiencies had trained the man's other faculties to a degree of vigour and acuteness that compensated for the entire absence of education.

Hulme's life was now a happy one, save for the reservation of bitterness that was eating like a canker at his heart. It was hard to see those two scoundrels prospering upon what he believed to be virtually stolen property. It was harder still to have been so deceived in Lily Warner. He could not help, amid all his rancour, thinking of her with tenderness and gratitude. He could not forget her patient devotion to him during his illness. Remembering these things, it was a mystery to him how she could have so suddenly ignored and forgotten him. Granting (as he suspected) that on his bed of sickness he had been weak enough to disclose to her his love, was there anything in that to give any girl offence? She might be sorry for him, but Lily's way was not the way in which a tender-hearted girl would show her sorrow for a misplaced affection. And she was going to become the wife of a man whom she must despise and detest, supposing her to possess any principle at all. It was all very hard to think about.

'Braker,' said Mr Gaverick that evening after dinner, 'tells me that the subscription of shares hangs fire a bit. They have got in fifteen thousand, and divided ten thousand between them. No doubt they will resort to some trick to make the shares go—the British investing public are such gullible asses!—but in the meantime, Dicky, do you go for them tooth and nail.'

'How, Mr Gaverick? What can I do to them?' the young man asked, opening his eyes wide with surprise.

'My boy, you are very innocent,' was the complacent answer. 'Just let Braker go at them, that's all. Do you imagine that fraudulent trustees can go scot-free?'

The light began to break upon Dicky Hulme. The idea of calling them to account for his mother's money had never occurred to him before. If he could do it!—the mere suggestion made him feel excited. There was intense sweetness to him in the thought of being able to bring the heartless defrauders of his mother—her virtual murderers—to book.

'We will instruct Braker to-morrow, Dicky. Let them look out for themselves!'

THE NEW TELEGRAPHY.



GREAT deal has been heard recently of 'telegraphing without wires,' and of what has been rather loosely described as 'wireless telegraphy.' Experiments have been made in various directions, and under more

or less responsible auspices, and the public has been a good deal exercised in its mind—or what it calls its mind—on the subject; while the press has written a good deal about it, without adding much to the general knowledge or enlightenment. It will surprise many people to be told, on no less reliable authority than that of Professor Silvanus P. Thompson, F.R.S., that *there is no such thing as wireless telegraphy*. True, one can send signals for a distance of a yard or two without any wires; but in all the recent successful attempts to telegraph across space, whether by electric waves or by other means, wires are used. They do not, indeed, run from the sending station to the receiving station like ordinary telegraph-line wires, but are used as what are called 'base-lines,' or 'base-areas'—that is, they are laid down, or suspended, in the immediate neighbourhood of the sending and receiving apparatus. It is a familiar fact in telegraphy that either earth or water can be used as a return circuit for electric currents; so that if base-lines of proportionate length be laid down on either side of a river or arm of the sea, it is readily con-

ceivable that signals could be conveyed across without the intervention of an electric cable. As a matter of fact, so long ago as 1882, Mr Preece, the electrician to the Post Office, conducted a series of researches upon the establishment of telegraphic communication between the Isle of Wight and the Hampshire coast without any connecting cable across the Solent. Large metal plates, to serve as electrodes, were immersed in the sea at the ends of the two base-lines. On the Hampshire coast the base-line extended from Portsmouth through Southampton to Hurst Castle, a length of twenty miles. On the island the base-line extended from Ryde through Newport to Sconce Point, and was about sixteen miles long. From Portsmouth to Ryde the breadth of the sea is six miles, while Hurst Castle is only about a mile from Sconce Point. Hence in this case the length of the base-lines considerably exceeded the average distance to be crossed. With this arrangement signals were passed in 'dot' and 'dash,' which could be read on the Morse system with ease; but telephonic speech was not possible, probably owing to inherent difficulties in the apparatus.

In 1893-94 Mr Preece established communication across the Kilbrannan Sound, between the isle of Arran and Kintyre, a distance of over four miles; and he also maintained telephonic speech across Loch Ness, a distance of a mile and a quarter.

In the experiments from Arran to Kintyre, parallel wires about three miles long were used as base-lines along the coast, while in some of the experiments two other base-lines were used, being insulated wires laid along each coast at a height of about five hundred feet above sea-level. A year earlier Mr Preece had made some striking experiments in the Bristol Channel, between Lavernock Point on the South Wales coast and the islands of the Flat Holm and the Steep Holm, the distances of which are, respectively, 3.1 and 5.35 miles. He received messages easily over the three miles separating the mainland from the Flat Holm; but at the Steep Holm, 5.35 miles away, though the signals were feebly perceptible, telegraphic conversation was impracticable, as the sound could not be differentiated into 'dots' and 'dashes.' Mr Preece came to the conclusion that with two base-lines, each ten miles long, he could with ease signal across a distance of ten miles. These experiments were made under what is called the 'conduction method' of signalling across space; and Professor Thompson points out that many experiments have been made under 'accidental circumstances,' all tending to prove the possibility of this mode of transmitting signals through the earth itself. The instruments in Greenwich Observatory, he tells us, are affected by the stray currents that escape into the earth from the badly insulated return circuit of the City and South London Electric Railway, four and a half miles away; while the whole of the railway telegraphs in the signal-boxes of the railways in South London were temporarily put out of order and rendered inoperative by one of the dynamos at an electric-lighting station at Deptford becoming connected to earth, the currents flowing in the earth being perceived in the telegraph instruments so far northwards as Leicester, and so far south as Paris. If, he concludes, this could occur as a mere accident, it is obvious that, with properly thought-out arrangements, signals could easily be sent from one part of the globe to another by conduction through earth or water.

What is called the 'induction method' is also used in connection with 'spacial' telegraphy. Here again Mr Preece is to the fore, and has told us of many cases in which telegraph or telephone messages that are being transmitted along some line have been heard, or rather overheard, in telephonic instruments in some totally disconnected and distant line. The greatest distance to which Mr Preece's experiments upon telegraph-lines have been carried is forty miles—namely, between the telegraph-lines that run across the Scottish border by the east and west coasts respectively. Sounds produced in the Newcastle and Jedburgh line were distinctly heard on the parallel line at Gretna, though there was no line connecting the two places. Here, however, since both lines used earth-returns, Dr Thompson thinks it probable that most of the

effect was due to conduction, and not to true induction.

Yet another method of telegraphing across space is called the 'electric-wave method,' by means of which it is said that signals can be transmitted through *solid stone walls*—something even more remarkable than the Röntgen Rays! Professor Oliver Lodge has done much in this direction, and some experiments of his at Oxford in 1894 led to communication being made between the university museum and the adjacent building of the Clarendon Laboratory. It was in this department of research that the British Telegraph Department afforded facilities to Mr Marconi, a young Italian, who about two years ago brought to this country an invention of his in the form of a greatly improved 'receiver.' First on Salisbury Plain, and then across the Bristol Channel, he succeeded in transmitting Morse signals to greater distances than any one had previously attained; and he sent signals from Lavernock Point to Bream Down, about nine miles as the crow flies, over the open Channel. More recently Mr Marconi has also experimented from a ship lying off Kingstown, by transmitting news telegrams relating to the Royal St George's Club Regatta to the *Dublin Daily Express*; and he has also sent messages from the Prince of Wales on board the royal yacht off Cowes to the Queen at Osborne. Experiments have also been made at Dover under the auspices of the Postal Telegraph Department, but with what precise results has not yet been made public. One thing is certain, however—there is no such thing as 'telegraphing without wires'; and it is equally certain that the base-line, or base-area, surrounded by wires, is a fundamental necessity. Given this, however, and given adequate methods of throwing electric energy into the transmitting system, and sufficiently sensitive instruments to pick up and translate the signals, Professor Thompson is of opinion that it is possible to establish electric communication between England and America, and even with the Cape, India, or Australia, without the intervention of a submarine cable. So sanguine is he, indeed, that some eight years ago he offered to one of his financial friends in the City to undertake seriously to establish telegraphic communication with the Cape, provided £10,000 were forthcoming to establish the necessary 'basal' circuits in the two countries and the instrument for creating the currents! His offer was deemed 'too visionary' for acceptance; but he still holds that the thing is quite feasible, that the one thing necessary is the adequate base-lines or areas, and that 'all the rest is detail.'

What strikes the ordinary lay mind about the matter is, that there would be a good deal of 'mixing up' about telegraphy of this kind. The difficulty of the early discoverers of electricity was how to 'harness' this fleet steed, and it was only when they were able to tie it to a wire

that telegraphy became practicable and reliable. Prearranged experiments are one thing: practical everyday working is quite another. Sending out a signal into space is easy enough, but catching it on the other side of a river or an arm of the sea, *unless you are specially looking out for it*, is quite another matter. Then, what is to prevent some other fellow from playing the part of 'eaves-dropper,' and picking up the message intended for you—some rival in trade, for example? We have heard of telegraph-wires being tapped, or 'milked,' and messages stolen as they were passing through; and it is conceivable that there would be a good deal of thieving of this kind in connection with 'spacial' telegraphy. It appears that Professor Oliver Lodge is engaged in experiments having for their object the creation of a certain sympathy between the sending and receiving apparatus, so that messages would always find their proper destination. This 'syntony,' as it is called, is brought about by 'tuning' the electrical oscillations to a corresponding 'tuning' of the receiving apparatus, so that they shall be both less sensitive to stray impulses and more sensitive to properly attuned waves—a very necessary condition, seeing the amount of 'stray' electricity there would generally be knocking about in connection with telegraphy across space. Obviously, there is a good deal to be done before this method of telegraphing can be made a commercial success. But even if its application be limited to communication between the shore and the light-ships, and between ship and ship, something of practical value will have been attained, not to mention the exchange of postal telegrams between Cardiff and Penarth across the harbour entrance, where a cable could not 'live,' owing to the constant dragging of ships' anchors and other tackle.

Oddly enough, the idea of this so-called 'new telegraphy' is a very old one. So long ago as

1842 Morse, the great American telegraph inventor, worked at the subject, and made experiments on the Susquehanna River, about a mile wide. He engaged Professor Gule to investigate the best conditions, and came to the conclusion that the base-lines should be three times as long as the distance to be crossed. Mr Dering, an English telegraph engineer, also worked at the subject. But perhaps the most definite results were achieved by James Bowman Lindsay, of Dundee, who, so long ago as 1831, conceived the idea of using water instead of wires to convey electric signals, and actually did so convey them across the Tay more than forty years ago. He even went so far as to express the opinion that signals might be so conveyed across the Atlantic; and in the printed proceedings of the British Association for 1859 his method of so doing is briefly described. Lindsay not only demonstrated the possibility of 'telegraphing without wires,' but he discovered the electric light, and publicly exhibited an electric lamp in Dundee in 1835. From a humble weaver he advanced to the position of science teacher. In the advertisement announcing the opening of his classes, which appeared in the *Dundee Advertiser* of 11th April 1834, the following remarkable passage occurs: 'Houses and towns will in a short time be lighted by electricity instead of gas, and heated by it instead of coals; and machinery will be wrought by it instead of steam, all at a trifling expense.' Verily, there is nothing new under the sun; or, as a French writer has it, 'There is nothing new but what has been forgotten.' But if the idea of telegraphing through space is not exactly new, it has acquired a new interest from the extremely lucid way in which it has been treated by Professor Silvanus P. Thompson, whose recent paper read to the Society of Arts is a model for scientific men generally.

CONDY SHEERAN'S COURTIN'.

By MAC, Author of *The Leaulin' Road to Donegal*; *The Humours of Donegal*, &c.



CONDY was a plodding, practical man. And Condy was a bachelor. Off and on for twenty years before, neighbours who had an interest in him—and neighbours who had an interest in their own daughters—had been advising Condy to take a wife unto him. 'Musha, Condy Sheeran, what's goin' to happen to ye, at all, at all—livin' there in that wee cabin yer *lee-alone*, with divil a sowl to look aither ye, or care for ye? Why, but ye rouse yerself up, man alive! an' look out for a strappin' young woman that 'ill put yer house to rights—an' yerself too; an' make a new man o' ye. There ye're doiterin' an' doiterin', in of the house,

an' out of the house, an' about the house, an' delvin' an' diggin' early an' late, summer an' winther, on yer wee farm, an' where yer comfort comes in is more nor I know. Yer house is in an uproar [disordered state] lek the fair of Carmen; an' wan would think the clothes on yer back was thrown at ye. Ye're scratchin' an' scrapin', layin' by money for the sorra-only-knows-who to scathier. Rouse yerself, man alive! There's girls on all sides of ye that the cheeks of them would be betther nor a fire in yer kitchen, an' they'd jump at the offer of bein' Missis Sheeran, if ye only sent them the word be a fiddler.'

Condy, inwardly amused, ever patiently listened

to the kind advice his good neighbours were so generous in bestowing on him. But his poor mother (God be merciful to her!) ere she died left Condy a legacy of proverbs that for years had given him pause. 'Never you buy a pig in a poke, Condy *ahaisge*,' his mother used to say, far from intending any disrespect to the young ladies of Dhrimholme; 'an' there's many a dashin' girl makes a poor dhraggle-tailed woman.' 'Betther alone than in bad company, Condy,' she would also say. And—a variation of this last—'A lonely hearth an' paice is betther nor the best woman in the wurrl' an' verrins' (variance).

Still, the more experience Condy had of the lonely hearth and peace, the more frequently would the question force itself on him: 'But if I had a middlin' good woman an' no verrins?' And as he and the cat sat by the hearth on a long winter's night, looking into each other's eyes, Condy, with the limited amount of imagination at his command, used often to picture a homely, sensible woman crooning a song round the house as she busied herself doing the *timirishes* (little necessary household matters), while he, with well-washed and well-patched clothes, lay back in his chair in the corner, and, watching her, puffed his little black pipe in cheerful contentment. And at length, when, after mature deliberation, he considered he had reached years of discretion—he was then forty-five, having been born June was three years after *the dear summer*—he decided he might venture to trust his judgment in selecting one fitted to be a wife to his mother's son.

So, on a night when he had a fine junt of fir blazing in the fire, and the cat blinking and purring at him across the hearth, and his black pipe working spasmodically and not uncomplainingly, Condy went painstakingly through the catalogue of eligible females in the parish. He first weeded out those that were too young—'A slip of a girl undher thirty doesn't know her own mind,' he said; 'so I'll have nothin' to say to wan o' them.' Then he rejected the crotchety, cranky ones, and all who were reputed possessors of any sort of ill-temper, and next the slatternly ones. 'Me sawnies,' Condy said to himself, 'the list's gettin' mortal small;' and so it was. And when, finally, he had also put aside all who were 'too fond o' the sight of the black pandy [porringer] on the coals'—which was to say all who were too fond of tea—just one woman remained. She was Ellen McGroarty of Throwerstown. Ellen was a daughter of Long Neil, and she had been the heiress of the McGroarty property, consisting of two acres of clayland and two miles of bog and heather—an extensive if not very remunerative estate; besides pigs, cows, ducks, drakes, and other farm stock. Regarding Ellen's age, it need only be said that she, like Condy, had reached years of discretion.

Having settled one difficulty, another loomed up on Condy's horizon, and required another night's grave deliberation—How was he to ask the wife?

'Of course'—and Condy seemed to direct his discourse to the cat—'I'm not used to this sort of business, niver bein' in the habit of axin' weemen.' Condy didn't intend to be satirical at the cost of the young men of Dhrimholme, but unconsciously he was. 'An' I wish I had it well over me.'

The etiquette of marriage proposals as observed in Dhrimholme was a mystery to Condy, who had never gone on such an expedition. If there had been an intended father-in-law in the case Condy would have seen his way pretty clearly—even a mother-in-law might have been negotiated. But Ellen was, again like himself, *lee-alone*. Of course, Condy had heard over and over again the ridiculous way they settle those matters in the tale-books—two blessed idiots squeezing the breath out of one another, one gasping, 'Say, beloved star of my existence, will you be mine for ever?' and the other fool rep'ying, 'Ye-ye-yes—yes, for ever and ever!' But he didn't give this silly method a moment's thought. He also saw that he might lift the latch and walk in to Ellen with 'God save all here; an' I want to know will ye take me, Ellen?' But little thought he gave that method. How he should do it was more than he knew; and he had half-begun to consider whether, after all, the advantages of having the best girl in the parish, with two acres of clayland and two miles of moorland, geese, pigs, and other farm stock to boot, would really outweigh the mental endeavour the asking of a wife would entail.

One thing, however, Condy did know; and that was, when any one went looking for a wife a bottle of whisky was an indispensable factor. So, with a prayer in his heart and a bottle of whisky in his pocket, Condy, on a beautiful moonlight night stepped over the moor to Ellen's. Ellen was carding wool in preparation for spinning as Condy, lifting the latch, thrust his head in at the door.

'God save ye, an' God bless the work!' he said.

'Save yerself kindly, an' thanky, Misther Sheeran,' Ellen, a little surprised, said. She laid down the cards, and drawing forward a chair, wiped it with her apron and set it in front of the fire. 'Come forrid, Misther Sheeran, an' take a glint o' the fire. *Ullaga*, a thin, sharp night it is. My fire might be better, too, but, *musha*, it was a poor saison for thurf.'

'Oh, thanky, thanky, Ellen,' Condy said, settling for himself a seat right at the door, as if he anticipated having to make a clean run for it and chose the readiest position. 'I'll just do here.'

'Arrah, bother! come up with yerself when I

tell ye. *Musha*, but ye're warm on it. It would be enough a day the crows would be puttin' out their tongues to go an' to sit by that doore—it's about as shelldery as an iron gate. Come up with yerself when I tell ye!

And as Condý took the proffered seat, Ellen's keen eye detected the neck of the bottle sticking out of Condý's pocket, and instantly a little light dawned on her.

So, as soon as she had put more turf and fir on the fire, and tidied up the hearth, she seated herself, and began the carding again very industriously, all the time running over the litany of woes attendant upon looking after a farm and farm-labourers, and cattle, and ducks and hens, and pigs—to all which Condý listened very attentively, and spoke not.

When Ellen had exhausted the topic, having advertised her dowry to her content, she made a politic pause. But Condý remained silent likewise. She ventured after a minute or two to steal a glance at him. He was putting his hand irresolutely into the pocket whence the bottle showed, and nervously drawing it back again. Ellen coughed; which startled Condý.

'Have ye—have ye—a—a egg-cup in the house?' he jerked out.

'A egg-cup? Yis, surely, Misther Sheeran'—with well-assumed surprise, and implying a politeness that forbade her to question her guest. 'Surely, Misther Sheeran, I've a egg-cup,' she repeated as she fished for one behind the plates on the dresser.

'I've—I've a small dhrop of nice whisky here,' Condý said, drawing forth the bottle, 'an' I thought ye mightn't object to helpin' me with just a thimbleful.'

'Well, thanky, an' long life to ye, Misther Sheeran; I can't have the bad manners to refuse ye—but let it be only a thimbleful. Och, that'll do, Misther Sheeran! Aisy, aisý! Faith, I'm afear'd it's the tailyer's thimble—ha! ha!—that ye measure with. No, no! taste it yerself first. Och, the sorra a dhrop of it crosses me lips the night till ye dhrink the *crivan* [overflow] off it yerself. No, no, no; it's no use—I'll not brák the word. Taste it yerself first, Misther Sheeran, an' laive me the dawniest little dhrop in the bottom.'

Condý was sitting half-turned from the fire holding the flowing egg-cup towards her, and Ellen stood facing him in a protesting attitude.

'I tell ye there's nothin' in it,' he said. 'It wouldn't dhrownd a bun-clock. *Musha*, woman, but ye're contrairy! Take it, I tell ye, an' throw it over; all's in it wouldn't brák a pledge.'

'An' I tell ye I won't, till ye dhrink at laist the two parts out of it. I'd be dhrunk if I took it, Condý Sheeran.'

'Dhrunk, *moryah*! There isn't as much in it as would wet yer thrapple. Well, here goes,' he

said, giving up the argument in despair—'here goes, an' God bless us!'

'Amain!' Ellen fervently responded, 'an' God bless us again.'

'Ah, ye haven't taken as much out of it,' Ellen said as she took the egg-cup from Condý, who, with the sleeve of his coat was wiping his mouth and smacking his lips with satisfaction—'ye haven't taken as much out of it as I'd lift with three pins. Anyhow—here she made a wry face at it—'here's luck an' prosperity to ye, Misther Sheeran, an' again God bless us.'

'Luck where it goes! Amain! an' thanky kindly,' Condý said.

Ellen just tasted it, made another wry face; tasted it again, and coughed distrestfully; finally gulped a sup of it, and, with a suggestion of agony expressed in the lines of her face, laid the egg-cup on the table.

'Take it all, I tell ye! Finish it.'

'I can't, I tell ye! Agh, agh!'

'I tell ye, ye must finish it.'

'An' I—agh, agh!—tell ye I won't. Now take a sup yerself.'

'Och, niver a drop till you throw off that eyeful there in the cup.'

'Ye're aggeravatin'! I tell ye I can't. Show me that bottle.' And taking bottle and egg-cup in her hands, she poured out for Condý a cupful with a *crivan* truly on it. 'Now, dhrink that over.'

'Well, it's you that's aggeravatin' now, woman,' Condý said as he carefully caught from her hand the overflowing cup. 'Is it to dhrink that?' and he took the measure of it with a side squint.

'Ay, that—an' another if you say much. Toss it over, an' be quick about it.'

'Och, then, aisý with ye, an' give me time—here's "May the divil niver see wan of us!"'

'Amain! amain!'

In a twinkling the egg-cup was empty.

Condý coughed as he handed it back to Ellen; and corking the bottle, he, according to custom, placed it on the dresser, thus resigning his ownership in the remainder.

Ellen again resumed her work, and Condý turned and gazed intently in the fire. She knew she had rid him of much of the distressing nervousness which troubled him before, and was now content to await developments.

'*Musha*! it's a cowl' night, Ellen,' Condý said, as he spread his hands towards the blaze and shrugged his shoulders.

'Cowl' indeed,' Ellen said.

'But a snug, warm little house ye have,' carrying his eye round it.

'Yis, thanks be to God, warm enough, an' snug enough; but—but—'

'But what?'

'Och, just'—with a thoughtful sigh—'I mane to say it's a bit—don't ye know?—lonesome.'

Condy was at once convinced he was dealing with a woman who knew her business.

'Lonesome?' said he. 'Throth, I don't doubt ye. I have the same feel meself.'

'Now, see that!' Ellen said, looking up at him with sympathy. 'I'm jist sure ye feel lonesome in that barrack of a house, all to yerself.'

'Divilish much so.'

For a minute or two both remained in thought.

'I often think to meself,' Ellen then said, 'that it isn't right to be alone.'

'Many's the time Sam Duncan, the great scripturarian, tells me the same words out of the Bible.'

'An' the Bible's right. For a man in purtikler, I don't know how he can live alone an' keep his temper, for all about him's going wrong.'

'You're right there. But no more can a woman, especially if she has a farm an' stock to look after; it's enough to brak any woman's heart.'

'Do ye know, Misther Sheeran, ye have the makin's of a snug, warin little place of it there. An' it was only the other night—whetsoniver put ye intil me head—I was jist thinkin' of ye—thinkin' how comfortable an' happy ye'd be if ye had some sort of a woman body to look after ye.'

'It's often,' Condy said, slowly shaking his head at the fire—'it's often I've thought the identical same thought meself.'

'Somewan of womankind,' Ellen went on—'an aunt or frien' who'd take a kindly intherest in ye, an' tidy up yer house an' yerself'—here Ellen glanced at Condy's dilapidated garments: Condy also glanced down at them and sighed—'an' make things look like a home it would be a pleasure to come intil.'

'Right ye are, in throth;' and Condy shook his head emphatically at the fire-blaze.

'We'll say it's a day coming on the winther, now,' Ellen in poetising strain went on, 'an' ye have been out the leelong day up to the knees in mud an' slush on the pratie-ridge an' in the pratie-sheugh, an' ye're comin' in dhirty an' eowl' an' miserable an' benumbed, an' the heat burstin' from the doore as ye open it cheers the bones o' ye. There's a roarin' fine fire leapin' on the h'arth, an' over it hangs a pot of spuds laughin' through their jackets at ye as ye come in. An' the h'arth's nate an' tidy, an' the house shinin' like a new pin; an' there's a clane-wiped chair in the corner, an' yer pipe an' tibbacky in the h'arth-hole right beside. An' the cat curled up wan side the fire, an' the dog in the other, an' a woman—yer aunt or cousin—slitherin' roun' the house doin' this turn an' that wan an' the other, an' fillin' the wee kettle to have it boiled an' singin' on the fire, callin' on the grain o' tay

for it to wet as soon as ye've filled the farlands with nice mealy spuds. Condy Sheeran, I say again—with the tone of one anticipating, but defying, contradiction—'I say again, it would be a comfort an' a delight to ye to have some clane, smart, and industrious woman-body about the house that would have yer happiness at heart; an' I say it would cheer the heart in ye many a day ye otherwise bring a cowl' heart intil a cowl' an' miserable kitchen.'

Every point and every shade of the picture Ellen called up Condy saw vividly in the blaze; and for a minute, with the delights of it, he was too overcome to express himself.

'Thru—thru—thru,' he at length said slowly and convincingly; 'it's every word thru as gospel, Ellen McGroarty.'

'A cousin, or an aunt, or a frien', then, ye should have,' Ellen said as she teased the wool with vigour.

'But that's just what I can't have. Barrin' me Aunt Mary that's married on Seumain Throwers of the Long Alt—and she can't come—I haven't a frien' in the wurrl, barrin' in Amiriky again; an' them that goes till Amiriky,' Condy went on thoughtfully, 'ill not in a hurry come back till Irelan' an' hardships for nothin' betther nor to keep house for a poor, good-for-nothin' divil of a lonesome bachelor lake me.'

Ellen, politically ignoring his plea of no friends, went on: 'There's fifty things about a house a man can't do an' won't do.'

'Can't do and won't do—exactly.'

'An' the house, sooner or later, goes to rack an' ruin; and he may then thank God if he doesn't go to rack himself.'

'Thank God he may; it's gospel thruh, Ellen McGroarty. But, as I sayed, I have neither aunt nor frien' of womankind.'

Ellen affected not to perceive the bait, and went off on a new tack, where it would be Condy's duty now to follow. 'For a woman's part, now, it is a different matther,' she said. 'There's meself, now, an' I'm livin' alone goin' on four years (it'll be four years *again* Oul' New Year's Eve, the 11th January, since me poor father—rest his soul!—died)—goin' on four years, an' I find I can manage bravely.'

Condy gulped. In a minute, with an almost pitiful appeal in his tones, he said, 'Ah, but, now, it's not the thing for a woman either, no more nor a man.'

'Well no, no, I suppose it's not altogether the thing,' she said, conceding a strong point.

'No; it's no more right for a woman to be alone than for a man,' Condy said, feeling ground again.

'Well, I suppose, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks at it in *that* light—*what* light Ellen meant wasn't exactly clear, for Condy did not seem to throw any dazlingly new light on the subject by the particular brillianey of his argument—

'when wan looks on it in *that* light, sartintly I suppose it isn't.'

'Sartintly it isn't,' Condry said with confidence; 'it's mortal lonesome.'

'Ay, lonesome it is,' and Ellen shook her head at the wool she carded.

'An' there's fifty things about a farm a woman can't do an' won't do,' Condry said, with ill-suppressed triumph, turning her own argument upon her.

'Well, yes,' as one who was forced to acknowledge defeat.

'An' a man's a mighty handy article to have knockin' aroun' a house,' said Condry.

'Yis, a man is; I give in to that.'

'Ye don't know when, or for what, ye need him.'

'Thru for ye enough, Misther Sheeran.'

'An' a woman's farm an' stock isn't cared for, or fed, or half looked aither—can't be—where there isn't a runt of a man.'

'Indeed, an' there's no lie in that,' Ellen acknowledged, with the tone of one on whom light was dawning.

'Then, Misther Sheeran,' she resumed, laughingly looking up at him, 'I suppose we'll have to give in wan of us is as bad off as the other?'

'That's just it,' Condry said. 'But'—after a slight pause—'it needn't be so.'

'Well,' Ellen said with clever stupidity, 'I have sartintly been thinkin' of hirin' a thorough good man—thinkin' of it for months back. A hired man is just the very thing I need.'

'A hired man,' Condry said, slightly losing heart again, 'isn't, aither all, the thing.'

'Well, sartintly, Misther Sheeran, when wan looks on it in *that* light'—for the mysterious light once more opportunely manifested itself to Ellen—'a hired man isn't the thing either. Still, I'm thinking, Misther Sheeran, I'd recommend you sthrongly to hire some good, steady, middlin' oul' woman; that's what you want when ye haven't any frien' of yer own to keep house for ye.'

'No, I'll not hire a woman. The fact is'—and he looked steadily at Ellen, who had her head bent unnecessarily low over her work—'I am in notions of marryin', if I could soot meself in a good woman, an' that she was willin'.'

'Oh now! Faith, an', Misther Sheeran, I think ye could soot yerself aasily in the parish. There's many a fine bouncin' girl would be happy to become Missis Sheeran if they only got the chance.'

'I want no bouncin' girls; I want a steady, respectable, sensible, daicent young woman, an' I'll have no other.'

'Well, I can't say but you're right enough there—if there's such to be foun' in the parish.'

'There is such, then.'

'Oh! Then, I'm sure, if ye find such a young woman, an' that she has sense, she'll think twicet, Misther Sheeran, afore she gives ye "No."'

'Thanky—thanky! An' I think, if I'm not takin' a liberty, that what *you* want is to marry a steady, sensible man, that'll take care of ye, an' of yer little farm an' belongin's.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' Ellen said, tossing her head and blushing. 'If ye say it in fun atself, Misther Sheeran, the same idea run in an' out o' me own head more nor wanst lately. But, Misther Sheeran'—here Ellen bent her head over the work again—'sensible, good men's scarce an' hard to be got these times.'

'An' Ellen, *a chara*, do ye think there's none such in the parish?'

'Och, indeed, there might be plenty; but I know very few such—barrin' yerself, Misther Sheeran.'

And a fortnight later Ellen was the wife of the one sensible man whom she knew in the parish.

HAPPY!

His youthful years had withered in the slum
Where he and his were bred.

He was a burden, and, though lips were dumb,
Hearts wished that he were dead.

And so wished he; for in his wearted soul
There was but one desire—
To slip away, to reach a strange, vague goal
Where time would cease to tire.

But on a day some one with grave, sweet face,
And tender, skilful hands,
Came to his side, and bore him from the place,
It seemed, to far-off lands.

Yet, after all, 'twas but a whirling hour
Out of the smoke-blind town
To where the sky shone with unblemished power
Over a fair, broad down.

And he, the cripple, whose sad Springs were more
Than one who watched him knew,
Had never seen so much green grass before,
Nor skies so big and blue.

He was so softly glad, so full of peace,
He laid him back and sighed,
And watched the deep sky and its floating fleece—
Dreaming that he had died.

J. J. BELL.

"An admirable combination of what is best
in the Old and the New Style of Periodical."—*Spectator*.

CHAMBERS'S

"A miniature library in
general literature.
Something for all classes
of readers."—*Scotsman*.

"'Chambers's' is, as ever, admirable.
Among the cheaper magazines
it still stands in the very
front rank."—*To-Day*.

JOURNAL

Part 13, January 1899, Price 8d.



THE First Part of a new Volume of CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL will
be published December 21, 1898, and will contain the opening
chapters of a New Novel of powerful interest, by

GUY BOOTHBY.

ENTITLED

"THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER."

This is a story descriptive of Russian convict life in the island of Saghalien,
full of dramatic incident and adventure.

Other attractive features of this Part will be original Short Stories by

JAMES WORKMAN, T. W. SPEIGHT, JAMES PATEY, &c.;

and the following interesting and entertaining Contributions:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| "The Legend of Blood Pool," | - | By MAJOR MOCKLER-FERRYMAN. |
| "Collectors and Collecting," | - | " H. D. LOWRY. |
| "Civil Service Shopkeeping," | - | " R. W. JOHNSTON. |

The Island of Paul and Virginia.

Cigarette-making.

Women in the Post Office.

Cocoa and Cocoa Adulteration.

The Officers' Mess.

Swiss Bee Schools.

Lumps of Luck: Stories of Great Nuggets.

To be had at all Booksellers and Newsagents, price 8d.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

Commencing a New
Volume.

Price 8^d.

For JANUARY 1899.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL Part for January begins a New Volume, and enters upon the Sixty-ninth Year of its successful career. William and Robert Chambers, the founders of the Magazine, had noted wherein the current cheap papers fell short, and determined that their Journal, from its first issue in 1832, *should instruct and elevate* independently of mere passing amusement.

The methods which characterised the policy of the early conductors of the Journal are continued by its present editors. Scarcely a subject of general interest can be mentioned that has not at one time or another found a place in these columns. There were magazines before Chambers's Journal; but probably because lacking in that wholesome, practical, and independent tone so necessary to existence, one by one they disappeared, leaving it still flourishing amongst an ever-increasing host of claimants for public favour. The same continuity of purpose and endeavour are to be found in its pages to-day. It goes without saying that no effort will be spared to make these pages all that they should be.

Annual Subscription, 7/9, or including postage to any address at home or abroad, 9/6.

Order from your Bookseller or Newsagent.

Please send me Monthly CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL for 1899, for which
I enclose £ : :

Name,

Address,

Now Ready, price 9s.

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL VOLUME for 1898,

CONTAINING

JOHN BUCHAN'S Novel, "JOHN BURNET of BARNES,"

AND COMPLETE STORIES BY

Guy Boothby, J. Arthur Barry, James Patey, W. E. Cule,
T. St E. Hake, &c.

W. & R. CHAMBERS, Ltd., LONDON and EDINBURGH.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

BEHIND THE SCENES.

CONTRARY to the opinion of those who, knowing little of theatrical matters, are prejudiced against them, it is a most difficult matter for an outsider to find his way 'behind the scenes.' The stage-door is most carefully guarded against the entrance of unauthorised visitors, and one must have actual business to transact before the manager will vouchsafe the magic 'open sesame.' For this place of make-believe and illusion is so busy a spot that a loitering idler would be terribly in the way, and would run no little risk of being injured by the carpenters and scene-shifters who hurry about the limited space burdened with all sorts of things incidental to the building up of the scenery.

A toy theatre, such as is sold for the delight of youth, with its cardboard scenes, will give some idea of the general construction of the genuine article, for it has 'wings' at the sides, entrances between those wings, and borders, by which is indicated those slips of canvas painted to imitate sky, trees, rafters, or curtains, as the case may be, which are hung horizontally above the stage. But there all resemblance ceases, a real stage being a far more complicated contrivance than the toy model from which we have drawn a parallel. A modern stage and its appurtenances is indeed a wondrous piece of mechanism, far more full of intricacies for its size than is a watch, and certainly affording a greater variety of mechanical movements.

A large stage may be compared to a house with many floors; and if we were to measure it from its lowest depths to the roof, we should find few many-storied houses to equal it in height. First, there is the stage itself upon which the actors tread the boards. Below this is the mezzanine floor, which is crowded with windlasses and other apparatus for working the traps, and is intersected by movable 'bridges' for the ascent and descent of large pieces of scenery. Beneath, deep down in the ground, is the cellar. This

underground world is often deeper than the stage itself is high, for it must have depth enough to engulf in its embrace an entire scene. Above the stage we find other floors: first, a couple of galleries, one on either side, technically known as 'the flies'; and, high above all, just below the roof of the building, is 'the gridiron,' from which pulleys for working the scenery and other apparatus depend. Those who regard the rigging of a ship as being intricate would be puzzled to find a term to apply to the mass of ropes which form a close network in the upper regions of a theatrical stage. The expression 'knowing the ropes' must have originated in a theatre rather than on ship-board; and to know them thoroughly needs familiarity from childhood. The work involved in rolling up the scenes or cloths is all done from the side galleries or flies; here, too, the 'borders' are changed when necessary, and the drop-scene or curtain hauled up and down by means of a windlass. It is also from this point of vantage that the beneficent beams of the limelight—now being superseded rapidly by electricity—are made to shine on the good fairies and other denizens of stage-land.

Just clear of the stage itself is the green-room, which may be regarded as the drawing-room of the establishment; rooms for the chorus, ballet, and the band; various dressing-rooms, upstairs and downstairs; the wardrobe room or rooms; and various other departments to which no particular attention need be directed. But there are one or two sections of a theatre which are worthy of more detailed notice. The scene-painting room is to an outsider full of interest; and few realise the amount of art-education necessary to those who have to design and carry out these huge pictures. Some ignorantly suppose that scene-painting is a synonym for daubing pigment on to canvas anyhow, and that such work is of the very roughest description. We need hardly say that this is by no means the case; in fact, the colours have to be put on in their right places as carefully as in the most highly finished miniature

painting. It requires, indeed, much art feeling and training to judge of the ultimate effect of handling a brush upon such a scale and upon such a large area as is represented by one of these sheets of canvas. It may be remembered that some of our leading landscape painters—notably Clarkson Stanfield and David Roberts—graduated in the painting-rooms of London theatres.

In painting a canvas, or cloth, as it is called, the material is strained on a frame, and is 'primed' with a coating of glue and whiting. The frame is moved vertically up and down, as occasion may require, through a slit in the floor. In some painting-rooms, however, the frame remains motionless, while the painter and his assistants are moved up and down in front of it on a bridge, like that often used in painting the fronts of houses. The scene is first of all designed on cardboard, ruled across in squares; and the canvas being similarly squared, the design can be sketched in proportionately. The colours are ground in water, tempered with size, and lightened in tone by the addition of the same kind of whiting as that used for cleaning household plate, &c.

Another department of this world of illusion is the property-room, so called because there the various 'properties' or 'props' are constructed and stored for use. Props comprise all the portable articles required in a play. Guns and pistols—which too often fail to go off at the critical moment—are props; loaves of bread, fowls, fruit, all made of a rough *papier-mache*, are also props. We may also include those wondrous gilt goblets, only seen on the stage, which make such a non-metallic thud when they fall and bounce upon the boards, as among the achievements of the property-man. But it is at pantomime-time that that individual is at his busiest. Big masks and make-believe sausages and vegetables, without which no pantomime would be complete, are mingled with fairy wands, garlands of artificial flowers, basket-work frames for the accommodation of giants, and other articles too numerous to mention. How the right things are forthcoming at the right moment is one of those mysteries only known to property-men. Had one of these useful members of the theatrical world the ability and inclination to write a book, what an entertaining volume could he turn out!

A London or first-class provincial theatre would not perhaps furnish examples of those stage *contraptions* which are often more amusing to the onlookers than the play itself; but in minor country theatres the most absurd and incongruous make-shifts are often introduced on the score of a very necessary economy. For example, at one country theatre, we remember a 'prop' which figured in Act I. as a sofa. It was a flat piece of scenery about six feet in length, with scroll edges which represented feet. In Act II. this same prop was turned round, and hung upside-

down by a cord round the hero's neck. It was painted on the side now presented to the audience like a boat; and as the actor grasped the heroine with one arm, he worked the boat up and down with the other while he proceeded across the stage behind a line of canvas representing a stormy sea. On this touching picture the curtain came down amid uproarious applause. Another occasion we call to mind, upon which a flat piece of scenery was used to represent a very solid object, when the resulting applause was of a more derisive nature. In this piece, a very full-flavoured melodrama, the heroine was in peril of her life by being placed by the villain across a railway track. On came an impossible locomotive, piloted at the back by a scene-shifter invisible to the audience, until by some mishap the engine fell flat on its face like a pancake, amid a roar of laughter from a delighted public. Such accidents as these never occur in a well-equipped theatre. Indeed, the complaint is sometimes made that the scenic illusion is so complete and beautiful that the attention of the audience is unduly distracted from the action of the play.

A curious part of stage illusion is that which may be comprehended under the term theatrical meteorology. Whatever may be the state of the weather outside, the stage-manager within can bring about rain and hail, wind, or a thunderstorm at will; and the illusion is so complete as to sometimes make nervous members of the audience insensibly shudder. Hail and rain are represented by a closed wooden cylinder about six feet long, which is obstructed inside by various cross-pieces, a quart of peas completing the arrangement. By turning this cylinder first one way up and then the other, the peas rattle through it with close imitation to the sound of heavy rain on a roof. The wind arrangement consists of a wheel of about two feet diameter, set in a frame like that of a grindstone. This wheel is furnished with ribs on its periphery somewhat like the floats of a waterwheel, and drawn tightly over these ribs is a piece of thick silk. When the wheel is turned the ribs rub against the silk, and by turning the handle first quickly and then slowly, a very good imitation of the sighing of the wind is produced. Lightning can easily be imitated by chemical or electrical means, and the usual mode of producing thunder is by shaking a large sheet of flexible iron plate. Some theatres, have, however, a far more elaborate and effective thunder arrangement, which is used as an auxiliary to the sheet of iron when a storm is supposed to reach its height. This consists of a number of cannon-balls held in a trough and allowed to fall at the right moment, and to run over a floor above the ceiling of the theatre. A snowstorm is brought about by a perforated revolving cylinder above the stage, charged with paper-cuttings. Unfortunately these messengers of frost have a habit of resting on all

kinds of projections, and dislodging themselves in subsequent scenes when their presence is not desirable.

Such is a general description of a British theatre so far as its stage arrangements are concerned; and it is noteworthy that, except in minor details, the mechanism employed has not changed for the past two hundred years. This is not because the mechanical arrangements are the best which could be devised, but rather because managers have been content to let matters remain as they are, feeling that, so long as their patrons are satisfied, it would be idle to spend money upon improvements which, although advisable, are not indispensable. Besides, managers are not generally owners of theatres, but rent them for a season only, or perhaps for a term of years. It would under such circumstances be unfair to expect them to make improvements which would be costly and which they could make no claim for on expiration of their tenancy. Then, again, the traditions with regard to stage construction in this country have been handed down through many generations of stage-carpenters, who recognise a certain method of doing a certain thing, and would look askance at any novelty as not to be countenanced.

It is not so on the Continent, where stage construction has of late years experienced a complete revolution. In most of these establishments the manager is represented by a government department with public funds at its disposal. Hence we find that abroad thousands of pounds have been expended in stage mechanism, while we at home have been content with the old methods. Costly experiments have been made, with the result that radical changes have been wrought in the working of stage machinery. Wood has largely given place to iron, hempen ropes to steel wires, while manual labour is largely superseded by hydraulic engines and electric motors. The main idea in making these improvements is to save labour, by bringing under one central control every piece of mechanism connected with the stage; so that, instead of an army of men turning

windlasses or hauling ropes at different points, one man by the touch of a button or a lever can bring about startling changes of scenery, and can even make parts of the stage assume new levels at will.

A notable feature of Continental stage mechanism is the use of hydraulic rams beneath different sections of the stage, by which parts of the floor can be raised, sunk, or inclined at any angle required. This method entirely does away with the clumsy old plan of building up set scenes by the aid of rostrums or raised temporary platforms. An hydraulic addition to the resources of the historic theatre at Drury Lane, London, of the nature just described, has recently been made. By its agency, in a recent representation of a scene in the Highlands, the characters walked up hill and down dale in the most natural manner. By the same means a river lock was represented, with a number of small boats and other craft gradually rising up as the water was supposed to be let into the enclosure. It should be mentioned that the necessary hydraulic machinery for this innovation was procured from Austria, as it could not be obtained here.

And this brings us to another point. The British stage-carpenter is what may be called a 'groovy' man; he has not been educated up to these new ways, and could not readily be made to believe in them. In Continental theatres, on the other hand, the stage-carpenter, as we know him here, has been extinguished by the stage-engineer, a man capable of designing machinery of an intricate character, and holding the same social position as an engineer or architect would with us. It is a new branch of the engineering profession, for which there was a want, and the supply was forthcoming. It will possibly be a long time before similar changes come about in this country. State-aided theatres over here have only reached the step of being talked about; should they ever become a reality, we may look for many improvements in mechanism 'behind the scenes.'

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER V.—'REVEL'S FIND.'



MR DAVID WARNER and his daughter occupied apartments in Davies Street, Berkeley Square, for the present; and Mr Mark Revel had chambers close by in Mount Street.

They were thus in near communication with each other, and dined together every evening at the rooms in Davies Street.

As Mr Gaverick had learned, the shares of 'Revel's Find' had not been going off very well;

but they were nearly all underwritten, so that the worthy promoters were not as yet particularly concerned about them. It was decided between them, however, that the business required a fillip, for the public had lately been badly bitten in one or two West Australian mines, and a feeling of confidence must be engendered.

Consequently, in the course of a few days the following report appeared in the financial newspapers in the City:

REVEL'S FIND.—Manager cables under date 10th instant: 'Have sunk shaft 200 feet on diagonal from north-east corner. At 45 feet have struck very rich lode running south-west. Convinced this is Whitehill lode. Have sent a ton of stone to be crushed at nearest battery.'

This had the desired effect, and a rush for shares set in before they could go to a premium, as they seemed very likely to do. The result of the crushing was anxiously awaited, and in a week it was known. The ton of ore yielded twenty-one ounces of gold. There were no longer shares to be had without paying a premium for them, and Warner and Revel were in high spirits.

'They'll go up and up, Revel,' said Warner that evening as they sat together smoking after dinner. Lily Warner was in the next room passing her time at a piano.

'It would be capital to realise at five pounds,' said the other. 'They will reach that price; the Whitehill lode undoubtedly runs through the property, and Whitehills are now seven and a half.'

'I think we had better have the rest of the purchase-money in shares. We should have thirty thousand each, and they will be worth a good deal more than cash.'

'I agree with you. But we must scatter them about amongst nominees before we begin to realise. The market is deucedly suspicious of vendors.'

'With good reason, Mark,' said the other, with a grin. 'A vendor is supposed to have faith enough in the property to hold on to his shares.'

'Oh, I have faith enough in it—I believe the gold is there. But I prefer cash in hand to dividends, no matter how big these may be. They are always tedious in coming, you know—and one never knows what may happen.'

'That's it, Mark—one never knows. For my part, I intend to unload a lot at three pounds, when they touch that price.'

'About half, say,' observed the other, thoughtfully. 'Yes; I have no doubt it's the best plan, Warner. Let us have another bottle of fizz upon it.'

The bottle of champagne was opened, and they sipped it in silence for some minutes. A glow of satisfaction shone in the face of each as they puffed the fragrant cigars and drank the excellent wine. All was going well with them, indeed. They had not yet received more than the ten thousand pounds already mentioned; but the money was safe in the hands of the company's bankers, and the drawing of it in due course was only a matter of form.

Lily Warner was touching the piano softly in the next room, and sometimes breaking into a low note of song. She sang only a few words at a time, sweetly enough to indicate the fine quality of her voice. Revel had for some time been listening attentively.

'I think, Warner,' he observed at length, 'I

will get a good house somewhere out in Surrey. That part is convenient for reaching the City; and I think Lily would like it better than London.'

Warner said nothing.

'Just a moderate-sized house, you know, with a few acres of land, and stabling. I must consult Lily in the matter.'

Again Warner said nothing, but continued smoking in silence. Revel glanced at him with some surprise.

'What do you think of it, Warner?'

'Oh, the idea is a very good one, no doubt,' answered Warner, rousing himself. 'But, by the way, have you ever popped the question to Lily yet?'

'No,' said Revel, darkening. 'I have not thought it necessary. I thought the matter was quite understood between you and me.'

'You see,' observed Warner, 'the girl may have a will of her own in that business. Girls sometimes have. Mind, I don't say it's the case with Lily, or that she would oppose any arrangement I made for her. I don't think she would, in fact. But I thought it right to mention the matter. As a formality, at least, you must ask her consent.'

As they were speaking the tinkling of the piano had, unnoticed by them, ceased in the adjoining room. Lily Warner was, in fact, entering the dining-room when the subject of their conversation caught her ear, and she came to a dead stop, standing white and still as a statue in the doorway.

'Oh, if that's all, it's nothing,' said Revel, in reply to Warner. 'You have only to tell her the arrangement, and of course she will fall in with it.'

'The arrangement was, that we were to go halves in the proceeds of the sale. We are doing that. I am not so clear, Mark, as to what you understand in regard to Lily.'

'You promised I should have her, didn't you?'

'Did I promise, after sharing halves with you, to throw the girl in?'

'I certainly so understood. There were no conditions mentioned.'

Revel was getting angry, but by an effort kept himself under control.

'Business is business, Mark. In business there are no such things known as free gifts. To be quite plain with you, if Lily is to form part of your share of the enterprise, there must be a consideration.'

'Warner,' answered Revel through his teeth, 'I never thought you would play me false like this!'

'Nonsense, Mark'—

'You are playing me false!' cried Revel. 'You distinctly promised me in Coolgardie that I should have the girl. You reminded me that

you had offered her as a gift to me before—at Adelaide—when I was compelled to decline relieving you of her. You are playing me false if you now go back upon a clear agreement.'

'I am not doing so,' said the other, placidly puffing his cigar. 'There was no clear agreement, as you call it, in regard to the girl. I did promise that you should have her, as you seemed to want her; but I never meant you should have her for nothing. Isn't she worth something more than that, Mark?'

Revel shut his lips tightly, in an effort to control the passion aroused within him. Warner seemed content to wait for his answer. With a deep breath, Revel said at length, slowly:

'How much do you want for her?'

'Well, let us say ten thousand of your shares. That will leave you with twenty thousand still—a pretty good provision, too.'

'I'll give you five thousand.'

'Not enough, Mark.' After a pause Warner added: 'I tell you what, Mark. We won't quarrel over the thing. Let it be eight thousand, and the girl's yours.'

'Needs must,' answered the other bitterly. 'You have me on the hip, and can dictate your terms. Eight thousand let it be. You will see that Lily will be ready to consent?'

'Oh, I'll see to that, Mark. Now, fill your glass, and let us drink to the success of the arrangement.'

It was a pleasant conversation for Lily Warner to listen to. When they began to drink the wine she retreated quietly to the room she had come from, and sat down again at the piano, very pale. Her fingers absently touched the keys from time to time, but she sang no more.

Next morning, as she was seated at breakfast with her father, she noticed that he was much disturbed by a letter he had received, and had pushed away his plate. She was wondering whether it was an angry communication from Mark Revel—for she had noticed how angry he was the night before—when that individual burst into the room, looking very agitated.

'See here!' he exclaimed to Warner, without noticing the girl; 'that infernal cub is in London, after all! Look at this letter.'

'I needn't look at it, Mark. I have a similar one myself.'

Revel dropped on a chair, with his elbows resting on his knees and his head stooped.

'I made sure,' he said—'I made sure he was in South Africa or some such place. What bad luck has brought him home again?'

Lily Warner was listening very attentively. Perhaps she suspected what the matter was.

'That speculation is bootless, Mark. The question is, What's to be done?'

Revel was thinking. Clearly it was a hard problem.

'It will be an awkward business, Warner, if

we are made criminally responsible. Fraudulent trusteeship is an ugly thing. And I know this fellow Braker; he will fasten to us with the tenacity of a bull-dog, and there will be no shaking him off with a compromise.'

'Which means, I suppose,' said Warner, with a sickly look, 'that we shall have to hand out three thousand a piece to that pestilent whelp?'

'More than that, probably. Or else face a judge and jury at the Old Bailey.'

Warner reflected for a few minutes. Both men became conscious, during this pause, of the presence of the girl at the breakfast-table, which, in their preoccupation, they had not noticed or thought of before.

'I tell you what, Mark,' observed Warner. 'Meet me at the office of the company at eleven. We'll talk further then.'

'We can drive in together, can't we?'

'Very well, Mark. I shall be ready in a few minutes.' He glanced at his daughter, who was now sufficiently aware of the nature of their disquietude. 'Lily, have you ever known or heard of any one named Hulme?'

'Yes,' she answered quietly, 'in Coolgardie. The young man I nursed in the fever was called Hulme.'

The two men stared at each other.

'Why did you never tell me that?' her father demanded.

'Why should I? I knew nothing about him, except that he was ill. I supposed you knew his name—if you cared to know. There was no mystery about him.'

Nothing more was said to her, and the two men walked down to the square for a cab.

'Well, Mark, we have been unlucky!' said Warner, drawing a deep respiration. 'To think of his being in Coolgardie, and down with typhoid! And here he is now in London, and the devil to pay!'

'The paying will have to be done, too—through the nose,' replied Revel, 'if we are to avoid worse.'

'We must try and get the rest of the cash from the board to-day.'

'What! To clear out, is it?'

'Hanged if I know!' was the uneasy answer.

'Better not attempt that, Warner. I would rather deal with any man in London than that Braker. He is as keen and relentless as a bloodhound. No; we must pay up whatever he will accept, and get out of it. After all, it will be only some three thousand each, and safety will be cheap at the price. I had better see Braker, I think, and have it out.'

The letters they had received were from Mr Braker, acting for Richard Hulme, and simply requesting to be informed of the name of a solicitor who would accept service of a summons requiring them to render an account of their trusteeship to the High Court. The communication was too ominous to be regarded lightly, and the worthies

who received it knew well what it meant. They had absconded from the country with the trust money. Revel was far from sure that Braker would lend himself to the compounding of a felony by assenting to a settlement. But he must see the lawyer all the same.

At the Bank he got out of the cab, to walk down to Mr Braker's office in King William Street. Warner drove on to the company's office in New Broad Street. There was to be a board meeting at twelve, and at that meeting they resolved to have a final settlement of the purchase of the mine. There were ample funds at the bank, and cheques and certificates could be written out in a few minutes. Revel promised to join Warner there after his interview with the solicitor.

Mr Braker was in his office. He was a thin, shaven, ascetic-looking man, with cold steely eyes and a determined mouth—a man one would hardly be encouraged to ask a concession or indulgence from. Such Revel knew him to be, and such he found him to be on the present occasion. Mr Braker was very polite but very decisive.

'I am afraid I cannot oblige you, Mr Revel, by accepting any settlement. My instructions are to bring you and Mr Warner into court.'

'We are ready to pay the money,' argued Revel. 'What more does your client want?'

'I cannot tell. I simply have my instructions.'

Then, fixing his cold eyes on Revel, he added after a moment:

'You are a solicitor, Mr Revel; I need not remind you of the gravity of the case. I need not ask you how you would feel your own responsibility if you were in my position. You are asking me to do a very serious thing by accepting repayment of the trust money. I cannot do it, sir.'

Revel began to feel terribly uneasy. If these proceedings were intended to be retributive, it was a dark prospect for Warner and him. It would mean the Old Bailey and Mr Justice Hawkins—a fearful lookout for wrong-doers.

'Where could I see your client?' he asked at length.

Mr Braker hesitated. But after some thought he gave Revel the address of Mr Gaverick's office.

Thither, with an anxious mind, Revel proceeded. He would offer any penalty to get out of this danger; but he was doubtful, after his interview with the solicitor, whether any offer would be accepted.

He found Hulme with Mr Gaverick. Glancing at the latter, Revel requested a private interview.

'This gentleman is my friend,' said Hulme. 'Anything you have to say to me may be said in his presence.'

'I have called about a letter which I, as well as Mr Warner, have received from your solicitor,

about your mother's trust fund. We are prepared to settle the matter.'

'How?' asked Hulme.

'If you will agree to a compromise,' said Revel cautiously.

'No,' was the decided answer. 'You have rendered yourselves amenable to the criminal law, and you both deserve all it could give you. Either take your chance of a trial, or pay me in full the amount of my mother's fund—six thousand pounds—with the four per cent. interest for the last eighteen months.'

'I am afraid we are not able to do that,' said Revel. 'Anything reasonable we will try to do.'

'Then,' replied Hulme, 'I wish you good-morning. You must go and deal with Mr Braker.'

Revel was sullenly silent. Hulme sat down at the table opposite Mr Gaverick, and proceeded to open some letters. Revel moved slowly towards the door.

'I will go over to New Broad Street and consult Mr Warner. Then I will come back and make you the best offer we can.'

'Mr Mark Revel,' said the young man, 'you will return here before twelve o'clock—it is now within a quarter of eleven—with the full amount I named, in cash, or you will have to arrange with Mr Braker. That is my last word.'

Grinding his teeth, Revel descended to the street. He was not long absent. In three-quarters of an hour he reappeared with a bundle of bank-notes, which he counted down on the table. Hulme gave him a receipt for the money, which he took without a word, and walked out. He heard Mr Gaverick indulge in a hearty laugh as he descended the first steps of the stair. His face was livid with mortification.

Out of the five thousand he had received from the company, Revel had only a few sovereigns left in his pocket now. Warner, he knew, was no better off. But, at all events, they had still twenty thousand in cash to receive, as well as their fully-paid shares, and in an hour's time they meant to have both.

Revel was back in time for the board meeting. There was not much business to transact, beyond signing certificates for shareholders, a small pile of which the secretary had before him on the table. The directors, therefore, earned their fees by a quarter of an hour's conversation on current topics—there were three, besides Warner and Revel—and then the chairman and another signed their names to the certificates and affixed the company's seal to them.

'That's all, I think?' observed the chairman genially when the little business was finished.

'I think, General,' said Warner, 'the time has come for the board to settle with the vendors. The company is in ample funds now, and our scrip for shares may as well be made out at the same time. Both Revel and I are willing to take the

balance in shares. That will leave only twenty thousand to be paid in cash.'

'Of course,' added Revel, 'as to the balance of thirty thousand, although we would prefer to take it in shares, we are entirely in the hands of the board. If you prefer to pay in cash, well and good.'

'That is quite fair, quite right,' said the chairman. 'What shall the balance be, gentlemen—shares or cash?'

'I think,' answered one of his colleagues, 'we ought to defer to the wishes of the vendors. Let it be shares. We shall have the more cash left for working expenses, and these may yet be heavier than we anticipate.'

'Very good,' replied the chairman; 'I shall minute it shares. The secretary will make out the certificates; also the cheques for twenty thousand pounds.'

So the thing was as good as done, and Warner lay back in his chair, with his hands in his trousers-pockets, mentally calculating how much his shares would be worth when the price reached three pounds. Another favourable report respecting the lode would quickly run them up to that price. With the eight thousand shares to be transferred to him by Revel as the purchase-price of his daughter, Warner would be the holder of thirty-eight thousand. Twenty thousand of these sold at three pounds would provide him with a snug capital for a number of 'operations' which he contemplated. The rest would constitute a comfortable reserve. In picturing all this in his mind, he forgot for the time the three thousand he had been obliged to drop that morning to young Hulme.

Not so placid were the reflections of Revel. The loss of that money rankled in his breast. So did the prospective transfer of eight thousand shares to his future father-in-law. If he could have ruined Warner with a stroke of his pen, how willingly he would have done it! But Warner was too clever for him—far too clever. He would have his revenge yet. As soon as he was married to Lily Warner he would devote himself, by every subtle and secret means in his power, to counteracting the schemes of his father-in-law. Warner could not fail to be vulnerable in many points, and Revel meant to keep a sharp lookout for these points, and deal a stab whenever the chance offered.

Let no one suppose he was in love with Lily Warner. He admired the girl as a most desirable chattel. She possessed style and beauty. His theory was that a business man with an attractive wife can turn her to valuable use in a variety of social ways conducive to his own advancement. Mark Revel knew what he was about in marrying Lily; but he had no love for her—he was incapable of such a sentiment.

The secretary filled in the cheques and the certificates, and laid them before the chairman.

The latter was about to sign them, when the office-boy brought in a cable message.

'What is it?' the chairman quickly asked the secretary, as the latter opened it. They were all eager to know, all eager to learn of the further development of the rich lode that promised to make the fortunes of the mine.

The message contained only the single word, 'Hairhang.' It was necessary to get the code-book to translate it. This was soon done, and the secretary was noticed to draw a quick breath.

'What is it, Mr Boke?' demanded the chairman again.

'Only one word, sir—"Hairhang," which means, "The lode has pinched out."'

'Impossible!' cried Warner, leaping to his feet.

The secretary placed the message and the code-book before him, and he verified the translation. There was no error about it. The lode had pinched out. It had been a delusion.

For some minutes there was silence. The chairman was the first to speak. He pushed away from him the cheque-book and the certificates.

'Under the circumstances, I do not think we should be justified in signing these. I am sure the vendors would not expect us to do so.'

'But we do expect you to do so,' said Warner resolutely. 'Why not? We have sold you the property, and you are bound to pay us the agreed price. Is it because of one disappointment we are to be defrauded of our bargain?'

'Defrauded is a word I must request you to withdraw, Mr Warner,' said the chairman severely.

'I beg pardon, General. But, all the same, I insist upon our right to be paid. There is plenty of gold in the mine. Only one shaft has been sunk as yet.'

'I hope you are right, Mr Warner. But I adhere to my opinion that, until it is shown that there is gold, we ought not to part with the purchase-money. We are responsible to the shareholders.'

'I protest, Mr Chairman.'

'Let the board decide,' the chairman observed, turning to his colleagues. These gentlemen were distinctly of the same opinion. The chairman closed the agenda-book and rose.

'That closes the meeting, gentlemen. Let us hope our next one will be held under brighter auspices.'

The other directors also rose, took their hats and coats, and went away.

This was a black day for Warner and Revel. When they were passing through the outer office, a few minutes later, the secretary was at the telephone.

'They had that news in the market,' he said, hanging up the receiver, 'hours before we got it

here. The shares are down to five shillings already.'

They went down the stairs to the street in silence. No two men in London were in what is popularly called 'a tighter place.' They had not ten pounds between them. What on earth were they to do now? There was no doubt in the mind of either that the mine was worthless, and that they would never get another penny of the purchase-money. If that accursed cable message had only been delayed half-an-hour.

The night was wet and cold, and Hulme,

going home late from a lecture at the Polytechnic, got out of the omnibus at Marble Arch to warm his feet with a walk the rest of the way. The rain had left off for an interval, but there was a biting cold wind. Whilst he stood a moment on the pavement to button up his overcoat, a young woman crept from the shadow of the gateway and timidly approached him. He stepped aside to get out of her way, and as he did so he heard his name softly pronounced. Turning quickly round, what was his amazement to see before him in the lamplight, pale and shivering, Lily Warner!

THE STRAW INDUSTRY.



O be described as a man of straw is somewhat unflattering, and, in a hard, matter-of-fact world, sufficient even to excite a certain amount of suspicion in the minds of men who, unlike Dick Swiveller, sometimes allow the wing of friendship to moult a feather.

There is, however, one spot of favoured earth where to be known as a man of straw is indeed a most honourable title, certain to command respect. This is in Luton, a clean, healthy town in South Bedfordshire, containing rather more than 32,000 inhabitants. Here in 'Strawopolis,' and a circle of villages all within fifteen miles of Luton, is the district where the straw hats are made which adorn the heads of our sisters, and which give a sense of airy freedom to the masculine wearer as well.

Although Luton is the *entrepôt*, there are other places in the district which depend solely upon the staple industry of the town for their livelihood. The 'straw circle' embraces Sandy and Potton, in Bedfordshire, on the north-west, and Dunstable, containing a population of 4513, east of Luton, on the Great Northern Railway. Just inside Hertfordshire is St Albans (with a population of about 13,000), Redbourn, and Harpenden, perhaps less progressive than the other villages. The entire population engaged in the straw trade would not probably exceed 60,000; but the money earned by the straw-workers is well able to support them, with ordinary care, all through the year. This is a saving clause, for many unfortunately lose their heads when the gold comes tumbling in at the end of each season. The result often is that the wiles of the railway companies prove too much for the imprudent and thriftless; and the result of a long holiday at Yarmouth, Brighton, Blackpool, or South Wales is a barren purse during the late autumn months, when work is scarce.

Originally the whole of the plait was grown, designed, and fashioned in the United Kingdom; but of late the foreign importers have beaten their English rivals completely out of the field. The

writer of this article was advised to buy an 'English rustic' for his own use by an expert; but when the establishment recommended was reached, the 'rustic Japanese' was so much more attractive that a hat of that kind was bought in preference. This has been the case in many instances that came to the writer's knowledge, for the Japanese excel both in material and exquisite design. The Chinese are clever, but unreliable on account of the amount of trickery to be contended against in dealing with them. A large trade is also done with France, Switzerland, and some parts of Italy. The most beautiful designs ever seen by the writer were imported from France. There were dozens of them in silk, ready to be copied in making up the plait, and certainly they gave evidence of marvellous inventive powers. There is a small amount of English plait used; but, although sound in quality, the price is too high and the designs wanting in ingenuity and prettiness. One of the most extraordinary things to a novice in connection with the manufacture of straw hats is the fact that straw in some cases is not used at all. The material is wood, so well got up and pliable that it is not discoverable unless pointed out by an expert. Then it can be seen at a glance that the material is merely a painted shaving.

The only other material used is felt, and generally but little of that. Women are mostly employed in the industry, but men do the blocking and felting. There is a considerable amount of dust arising from the work, but it is comparatively innocuous, having nothing deadly in its composition, like the dust breathed by file-makers and others who work where lead, steel, and zinc are in process of manufacture.

There are, however, many peculiarities in the straw trade which deserve mention. What most excited the interest of the writer was the system of the selling of plait—that is, the material in the rough in the first instance—by the manufacturers to the small maker. The manufacturers sell their own imported plait at a profit to the small maker, who then works it up into hats ready

for the buyers from London, Paris, or any other great centre. The small maker has in many instances to buy also or invent his own design. When he has completed a number of hats and worked all the plait up, he takes them to the manufacturer, who buys them again in a saleable shape. This is not all. Although the big manufacturer sold the petty maker the plait, he may, upon some pretext or other, refuse to buy the hats when manufactured, thus in some cases bringing ruin upon the maker. Of course in that case the hats may be offered for sale to other manufacturers; but as a rule these have their regular customers (who are also makers), and may refuse to buy unless they were the vendors of the raw plait to the maker in the first instance. This does not happen very often; but the cases in which this is done are sufficiently numerous to cause much anxiety to the petty manufacturer, who does not work in the factories as a mechanic on piece-work.

Luton is honeycombed with 'manufacturers.' Perhaps a man has his wife, two daughters, and a son to assist him. The son does the 'milling,' the strongest girl the 'machining,' the father the 'blocking,' and the mother and the other daughter finish off the hats by sewing in linings, ticketing, and so on. The father would probably have a brass plate upon his door which would have his name and the word 'manufacturer' engraved upon it.

Much of the foreign plait is already bleached and dyed before it is shipped for England; but when this is not the case there are bleachers and dyers already on the spot who carry out the necessary processes; and this branch of the trade is highly lucrative—in fact, the straw trade is a very lucrative industry altogether. The manufacturers of Luton do not, perhaps, acquire the fortunes achieved by the manufacturers of steel, cotton, and cannon. The wealthiest manufacturer in Luton or St Albans would not possess a fortune exceeding £60,000 perhaps, but the trade is universally lucrative. Failures are few, and these are generally brought about by incompetence or extravagance, or both. The average manufacturer makes his five hundred to a thousand a year easily—that is, without strain or any amount of mental worry. There are plenty of men who live by importing and selling plait alone, others bleach and dye, while the manufacturers make their own hats or sell plait to be made up in the way described. The rateable value of Luton, with its population of about 32,000, is over £125,000; and St Albans, with a population of 13,000, is rated at nearly £48,000.

Before the writer proceeded to Luton in a journalistic capacity, he was informed in a London club that the women engaged in the straw trade outnumbered the men by nearly ten to one. As this seems to be a general impression in London and many other places, it may be as well to say

at once that it is entirely erroneous. Upon careful inquiry it would be found that even at the height of the busy season the women never outnumber the men in a greater proportion than three to one. Even then some allowance must be made for hundreds of girls who come to Luton to work in the factory rooms from Dunstable, Harpenden, and other outlying places, returning home to sleep every night. The average proportion employed all the year through would not be greater than two to one.

Some time ago a rumour got about that excited the ire and amazement of the feminine population. The disparity in the sexes in Luton has ever been at once a vexed question and a standing joke. Judge of the mingled laughter and horror which greeted the report that five thousand Japanese girls were coming to this country in order to combat the necessity of importing designed plait over so many thousands of miles of ocean. The idea certainly was plausible if it could have been carried out, and it caught on, some of the manufacturers themselves seriously discussing the project. Rumour reached such a height at last that many believed that not only were Japanese coming, but French, Swiss, and Chinese as well. These foreigners were to design and work up British-grown straw-plait artistically after the fashion of their native countries. Although this was seriously contemplated, the scheme proved unworkable for many reasons. Upon making inquiries the writer elicited that the matter never went beyond a proposal to subscribe £20,000 for purposes of experiment, and that the Japanese Consul-general had never been seriously approached upon the subject. A few enthusiasts predict that the scheme will be revived; but even if it is, in the humble opinion of the writer, it must inevitably fall to the ground.

The inhabitants are exceedingly hospitable, and certainly the girls engaged in the trade are well dressed, pretty, and modest in their behaviour. The town contains plenty of musical talent, and it boasts the possession of the famous Red Cross Silver Prize Band; but otherwise there are hardly attractions enough to keep the young people off the streets. Luton is rigidly Nonconformist in its tendencies, and the Council absolutely decline to license a theatre. There is a 'guff' which gives entertainments upon approbation, but in no way can it claim the title and dignity of a theatre. Able lecturers attend periodically at the Plait Hall, and provincial theatrical companies appear occasionally at the Town Hall. The manufacturers are chiefly Baptists, Congregationalists, and Wesleyan Methodists, and the ministers use every effort to make their respective churches attractive. The bane of the young connected with the straw trade is the instinct of extravagance. Money in the season is earned easily, and it filters through the purses of the thriftless. Luton, however, is by no means isolated in this respect.

Like nearly everything else connected with the straw industry, the town is very clean. It is also drained upon the best scientific principles, and contains two public parks, a recreation-ground, a hospital, and a public library. The social clubs are much above the average, and strangers who have business in the town are generally loath to leave it. There is a sublime spirit of *camaraderie* among all classes. Poverty

is to be found among those employed in the straw industry as in every trade, but on a smaller scale than in many towns of double the size of Luton. The impression left upon the mind of the visitor is altogether pleasant—an impression which goes to create a lasting belief that the straw industry is one of the most useful, lucrative, and healthy to be found in the United Kingdom.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND: A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER II.

THE library, as the Bishop had expected, was empty. Martin followed him almost at once, closed the door, and stood waiting.

It was then that his lordship saw the full difficulty of his task. His suspicions, after all, were not certainties, and he was on delicate ground. He decided to speak delicately.

'I wish to say a word about this diamond,' he began, after a long and uncomfortable pause—'the diamond which Lady Stalland has lost.'

Martin inclined his head. In the fading light his face was perfectly inscrutable.

'We may feel sure,' continued the Bishop—'we may feel sure that no one would take the stone deliberately and with full consideration of his action. Temptation is sometimes too strong for the best intentions; it is yielded to in a moment of sudden madness. The action is repented of as soon as it has been committed. Do you understand me?'

'I—I think so, my lord,' answered the footman in a husky voice.

'I trust that no person would be disposed to treat such a fall with too great severity,' the Bishop went on, choosing his words with painful consideration; 'but—but the duty of the culprit is clear. He will at once restore the lost article to its owner in the way which seems best to him, and he will leave the scene of his temptation for ever. You follow me, Martin?'

'Yes—oh yes, my lord,' answered the man again; and his voice was more husky than before.

The Bishop felt greatly relieved. True, the footman had not acknowledged his guilt, but he evidently understood. He would treat him very mercifully.

'That is well,' he said; 'that is well. And I think I may say—I feel sure—that if this is done not a word shall be said. The matter will go no further.'

'It will go no further, my lord,' said Martin.

'You have been so kind in the past that I am sure the matter will go no further.'

The man's voice was broken and unsteady. The library had grown darker during their conversation, and his face was turned aside, but his words were plain enough for any one. The Bishop gave a slight cough, and concluded:

'Then that will do, Martin. I think we quite understand each other. That will do.'

Martin left the room silently. For a while his former master stood alone, thinking of what had passed.

'Perhaps,' he mused—'perhaps I have been too easy, too merciful; but, after all, I could not be certain, and dared not make a mistake. If he has it, he must have picked it up just before he came upon me in the drawing-room. Now he will restore it and go away. It is a strange business—a very unpleasant business; but I have done my best to put it right.'

He felt so satisfied with his efforts that he heard with great composure, a little later on, that the lost jewel had not yet been found. This intelligence was brought by Sir Edward himself, who entered the library looking much upset.

'Every possible and probable spot has been searched over and over again,' he said. 'I am afraid that this is not a mere case of accident.'

'Indeed?' said the Bishop gravely.

'No. A stone of that size cannot lie long unnoticed. Its very brilliancy would be against that. I am afraid'—

'You are afraid?'—

'That this is a very serious matter,' said Sir Edward in a lower tone—'a very serious matter. The diamond was dropped in the drawing-room just before we went upstairs to dress for dinner. It must have been picked up after we had gone and before you came down.'

'My own conclusion,' thought the Bishop; and he nodded with increased gravity.

'Then,' continued his host slowly, with the air of one who knows the importance of his de-

cisions—'then the field of inquiry is limited. I quite appreciate the injury which might be caused by a false accusation; but—but I must act at once. Some of my servants are new and untried.'

'Hem!' said the Bishop. 'I understand—I fully understand.'

'But I must not go into this business myself,' added Sir Edward. 'It shall be given into skilled hands. There is a man on the detective staff at Hazleton who has done well in matters of this kind, and I could have him here by to-morrow. What is your opinion?'

The Bishop gave it his earnest consideration. He felt sure that by to-morrow the stone would be restored and the affair happily concluded; but he could not say so. It would satisfy the somewhat restless and excitable baronet if he were allowed to have his own way.

'There is no harm in it,' he decided aloud. 'Yes, on the whole, I think your course is a wise one. It is such a delicate matter—in your own household.'

Sir Edward moved to the writing-table. 'That is exactly the point,' he said. 'I feel so helpless, and this man will know exactly what to do. I will write at once.'

He rang for lights, and then wrote a hurried letter. In five minutes it was finished, sealed, and addressed, and given into the hands of a groom, with strict orders that it should be posted immediately.

'Now I feel more easy,' declared the master of the house. 'He will be here by Sunday evening at latest; and in the meantime we must keep our eyes open. Let us go into the drawing-room.'

The Bishop went, feeling pleasantly conscious that he had laid the train for a satisfactory sequel to this disturbing incident. His very merciful treatment of Martin, too, was an agreeable memory; and he joined the party in the drawing-room with a smiling and benign countenance. The restraint which had naturally fallen upon every one only served to emphasise his good spirits. He told his best stories in his very best manner, and his laugh was as free and hearty as that of Commander Digby himself.

When the hour came for retiring he passed up the great staircase with a light heart. It was his rule to retire early on a Saturday, and he had promised to conduct the service in the village church next morning. He would spend a pleasant, restful night, and would awake in good time to enjoy the first freshness of a summer Sabbath.

His room was on the first landing; but just as he reached the door he was surprised to hear a patter-patter of little feet in the corridor above. A moment later a small figure in white ran to the stair-rail, and an eager face, crowned with a tangle of short curls, looked over at him.

'Wobber!' cried a childish voice in a loud whisper; 'wobber!'

The Bishop gazed at the apparition in astonishment. There was mischief in that little face; but he thought there was also a certain amount of awe and admiration. While he wondered two hands seized the white-robed figure from behind, and he caught a glimpse of another face, flushed with annoyance.

'Oh, Miss Connie, for shame!' cried the nurse. 'Come back to bed at once.'

'It's the wobber,' protested Miss Connie, struggling in vain. 'I want to see the wobber.' And then the figures vanished together, amid subdued exclamations of entreaty and rebuke.

The Bishop entered his room and locked the door. 'The ways of children,' he said to himself, 'are very amusing—very amusing indeed. I wonder what she was thinking of.'

He had almost entirely forgotten his previous conversation with Miss Connie, and her words had no clear meaning for him. Like many others among our learned, he was rather absent-minded, and his memory was not to be trusted. He dismissed the matter with a smile, and prepared to disrobe himself in pleasant expectation of quiet slumber.

During this process he became aware that there was something small and hard in one of his vest-pockets. With some curiosity he took it between his finger and thumb and brought it to the light.

For a few moments he gazed at the object in simple wonder, turning it over and over. Then he laid it on the mantelshelf, and gazed at it again. The wonder in his face changed to a look of consternation.

The article before him was small, indeed, but its size had nothing to do with the matter. It glittered brightly in the rays of the gas-jet—glittered with a purity and brilliancy which even a child could not mistake. He took it up again, and turned it over once more. 'This,' he muttered, in a tone of sudden conviction—'this is Lady Stalland's diamond!'

Some convictions come as inspirations. This one followed from no train of thought, no mental process; but the mind was immediately satisfied with it. Afterwards came an illuminating flash of memory which seemed to make everything clear.

There were Sir Edward's words in the library—that the very brilliancy of the stone must have prevented it from lying long unnoticed. It was quite true—its glitter had attracted his own eye, and he had picked it up as one of the child's toys. If it had been one of her playthings she would have missed it at once.

And during all the searching and commotion the gem had been lying securely in an episcopal pocket. How ridiculous—how absurd! But at all events it was found now, and could be re-

stored in a moment. The Bishop began to put on again the garments he had removed, so that he might run downstairs. But before he had completed this work his face clouded over with dismay. He stopped to think.

In explanation of his further conduct it is only fair to remark here that our Bishop was extremely, nervously sensitive. Criticism of his public work had caused him many sleepless nights, and the slightest breath of blame had the power to give him pain. He suddenly called to mind what had passed during the evening, and saw that he stood in a peculiarly unfortunate position.

At the dinner-table he had expressly denied having seen the diamond. He had looked on at the general distress with sympathetic eyes; he had conversed with his host on the matter, and had even advised him to send for the police. Would any one believe—could he expect any one to believe—that he had been in possession of the missing article all the while without knowing it? Preposterous!

He might explain that he had forgotten—forgotten that he had found a ten-thousand-pound diamond ten minutes before! He might declare that he had mistaken it for a piece of glass, and they would smile. Who could mistake a stone of that lustre and beauty for anything else? People were so prone to think evil—even of bishops! They would glance at each other in a meaning way; they would rake up remembered cases of sudden temptation and quick repentance—the smirch of suspicion would remain upon his name for ever. A dampness broke out upon his brow, and he stared at that wretched diamond in growing horror.

There came a sound of footsteps and voices in the corridor. He started and listened guiltily,

with a vague thought of police. Then he knew that the voices were those of his fellow-guests, retiring for the night.

He pulled himself together. In a few minutes his host would come upstairs also. He would wait until he reached the corridor, and then call him in. Sir Edward would understand, and the matter would go no further. He went hastily to the door and waited, listening, with his hand upon the key.

The time went slowly, but at last he heard voices once more. Sir Edward was coming upstairs now, probably with Lady Stalland. In two minutes all would be right again.

But then another dreadful question occurred to him. Would it all be right? Sir Edward was of a suspicious, hasty temperament. Only the Bishop knew that a detective had been sent for, and the master of the house would not fail to recall the fact. It might appear even more curious to him than to any one else. He might think that his talk of police had frightened the culprit into a surrender of his spoil. He might think—Good heavens! he might think almost anything, and with excellent reason, too.

So the Bishop reflected in an agony of doubt and indecision. All his moral strength, his courage, his stability, seemed to have deserted him. He heard Sir Edward's footsteps approach—they reached his door—they were passing. His fingers trembled upon the key but did not turn it. It was too late!

The footsteps died away; a door was opened and closed at the end of the corridor. That sound came with a shock; it told him that he had failed—that he had fallen. The chance had gone.

'And I,' he growled—'I am a villain! I—I have stolen the diamond!'

SOME CENTRAL AMERICAN INDIANS.

THE descendants of that mysterious race who occupied Mexico before the coming of the Aztecs (and who afterwards migrated into Yucatan and Central America, where traces of their civilisation are still to be seen in the form of temples, monoliths, and mounds) are still to be found along the valley of the Lacantón River and in the central and southern portions of the peninsula of Yucatan. The Lacantón Indians are probably in much the same condition as they were at the time of the conquest; they still sacrifice to their ancient gods, and iron has not as yet superseded flint in the manufacture of their weapons and implements. The eastern coast of Yucatan, though nominally Mexican territory, is occupied by a tribe of Indians known as the Santa Cruz, who many years ago threw off their allegiance to Mexico

after massacring every Spaniard in their country upon whom they could lay hands. These Indians are savage and warlike, and do not allow any stranger to enter their country unless he has got special permission from the chief, and is conducted during his stay there by one of themselves.

They take great trouble in concealing their villages in the bush, even cutting out the tongues of their cocks to prevent enemies being guided to the village by the noise of their crowing. In travelling along the main tracks through the bush one will come across only a cluster of two or three huts at long intervals, and probably pass without noticing the narrow tracks which, if followed, lead to villages buried in the dense bush. The houses are constructed of upright beams, forked at the ends, on which are laid cross-pieces; the walls are built of pimento stems placed close together, and sometimes plastered over

with mud; the roof is thatched with palm-leaves, and the whole structure is bound together with *ti-ti*, a long, tough creeper which is very plentiful in the bush, and entirely supplies the place of rope and nails with the Indians.

Physically the Santa Cruz are rather a fine race, some of the women being really pretty, even according to European standards. The hair is long, black, and straight, the complexion light brown, the limbs muscular and well proportioned, and the extremities small and delicate.

The Indian's property consists of his hammock, a few calabashes and earthen pots, his machete (a heavy sword-like knife, which he uses indiscriminately for fighting, bush-clearing, and agricultural work), and a cotton suit. All these he can carry in his *macapul* (a netted bag slung over the back and attached to the forehead); and with his wife, and dogs trotting behind, he frequently moves from place to place, as a new house can be put up in the course of a few days, and every man is his own architect and builder. It is, in fact, quite common for whole villages to move in this way when they have exhausted all the neighbouring corn-growing lands, as the same piece of land will only produce one good crop of maize without manuring.

Their religion is a curious grafting of Christianity on to their ancient faith. They will on no account excavate in the numerous ancient mounds which abound in the country, and firmly believe that they see the small idols which are found in these walking about in the bush at night.

They will put their arms round the neck of a corpse, and whisper messages to it to be conveyed to their friends in the other world. If a chief is very ill, *pavos del monte*, or wild turkeys, are sacrificed, and the blood made into small cakes, which are partaken of by the whole village. In their principal village is a large cross, left by the Mexicans when they were massacred, and this they worship as a god, believing that it has the power of speech, and approaching it only with bare feet.

Their medical knowledge is very primitive, though they put up a simple fracture of one of the long bones very neatly, using a padding of cotton-wool all round the limb after bringing the fragments together; and over this are placed a number of small, round, straight sticks, the whole being bound round with blue-gum fibres. Bleeding they perform with a piece of sharpened bone, usually opening the temporal vein. This is a very common operation amongst them, nearly every one undergoing it at some time in his life. A very favourite remedy is a decoction made from the charred remains of animals, different animals being used for different diseases. A large kind of rat was in great request for whooping-cough. When suffering from malaria they will lie in their hammocks with a small fire under-

neath; or, lighting a fire on the earthen floor till it is very hot, they will lie on this, and after getting thoroughly heated, take a plunge into cold water.

The children are very much given to clay eating, which makes them pot-bellied and anæmic. I asked a little girl of eight or nine years how much clay she ate in a day, and she scraped about a couple of ounces from the mud-plastered side of the house as her daily allowance.

The women do by far the greater part of the work; they rise at three in the morning to grind the daily allowance of corn for the family. This is done on a large, flat rubbing-stone. A round stone rubber like a rolling-pin is used. The corn is placed on the flat stone, and the woman, standing behind, rolls it between the two stones, adding water from time to time till it is changed to a dough-like mass; pieces are taken from this as required, and made into flat, round cakes, which are baked on an earthen plate over the fire. These cakes are soapy in taste and very gritty, as a large part of the stone is ground off into the corn every time it is used. The maize, the evening before it is required for grinding, is put into a large earthen pot, with lime, and allowed to boil all night over the fire, to remove the outer husk and soften the grain. The women wear a single loose garment of cotton, woven by themselves, but square at the neck and without sleeves; sometimes they embroider coloured devices into these round the neck and over the breast. Both men and women wear sandals made from the hide of the danta or tapir.

The tribe is governed by a chief whose power is absolute; and they are very jealous of any outside interference, especially from the Spaniards. On one occasion the Mexican government attempted to cut a road through the bush from Peto to the Santa Cruz capital; five of the Indians went to see the work, and were well treated and had presents made to them by the Mexicans, but on returning to their village they were at once executed as traitors by order of the chief.

The usual mode of execution is curious. When the chief decides that a man has merited death he is not informed of his sentence, nor does he undergo any sort of trial, but some of the chief's soldiers are despatched to his house, who, taking him unawares, slaughter him at once by chopping him with their machetes.

A few years ago one of the under chiefs had come down to visit the village of Corofal, in British Honduras, and whilst there had bought a bottle of laudanum for the cure of toothache. When he returned to his village he was met by three messengers from the chief, Roman Pec, who informed him that he was at once to return with them, as the chief required him. Being well aware that this was equivalent to his death-sentence, he asked the soldiers' permission to retire for

a few moments to prepare for the journey. After some hesitation they gave him permission, when he went at once to his *macapal*, took out the bottle of landannm, and swallowed the whole, and then started with the soldiers. Before they had gone very far the opium began to take effect, and notwithstanding the efforts of the soldiers to get him along by pricking him with their machetes, he was dead before they reached the chief.

Men and women alike are very fond of rum, and I have seen a pretty little Indian girl of seventeen or eighteen, who had come into the

nearest English settlement, go straight off to the liquor store and purchase half-a-pint of overproof white rum; this she drank down in three or four gulps, and in a few minutes lay down in the *plaza* in a semi-comatose condition to sleep off the effects. The men when intoxicated get savage and quarrelsome, and any European who finds himself in a village when a demijohn of rum has been brought in had better retire as quickly as possible; for, no matter how friendly they may have been before, they are almost certain to attack him as soon as the rum begins to take effect.

THE LEARNING OF THE UNLEARNED.



HAVE little or no hope of making the reader who glances leisurely over these lines some six months hence—always supposing that the kindness of a discriminating editor permits the eyes of any reader to fall upon them—I have, I repeat, little hope of making the possible reader comprehend, much less sympathise with, my present trials and difficulties in what seems at first sight a very simple matter—nothing more, in short, than the placing of a broody hen on the sitting of eggs by which my modest poultry-yard is annually replenished.

The possible reader who pursues me farther than the above unwieldy paragraph—so palpably 'pointless'—will doubtless suggest that, in default of practical knowledge, I should follow the excellent advice laid down by such masters of poultry lore and poultry literature as Messrs——. Some half-dozen names occur to me here, and to select would be invidious. Alas! to their excellent manuals have I in this emergency applied in vain. I have gleaned much useful information from them on many points: on the choice of a desirable 'general purposes' fowl; on the treatment of sitting hens; on the rearing of chickens through all their little life from the shell to the pot. But on two important points are my instructors silent. They do not tell me how to induce my old and valued sitting hen to 'go broody' at the time when I require her services in this particular; nor how to ensure that the hens whose virtues I wish to perpetuate shall not cease laying just at the time when *their* services are required to produce the requisite 'sitting' of eggs. *Hinc illic lacrimæ.*

This is not precisely the strain in which this paper was intended to commence; 'but 'twill serve.' I hesitate to neglect the inspiration that is born of passing events. Nor is this complaint of the contrariety of my feathered charges by any means as foreign to my title and matter as may at first sight be judged. Hazlitt exposed in a

brilliant essay the 'Ignorance of the Learned,' acting perhaps rather the part of Saul among the prophets; so I—whether of the learned or of the ignorant it boots not to inquire—would raise my voice in the cause of the too often unchampioned ignorant. For a learning they have, though not of books. I warrant me some old village dame, whose reading begins and ends with the large letters of advertising posters, and whose penmanship is her 'mark,' would in my case have her laying hens and her broody hen ready to hand when wanted; while I—

'They think they know that things are so-and-so because they have read it in books; now I know how they are by actual experience,' said to me an octogenarian fresh from a dispute with his college-bred son and daughter. The old gentleman was himself by no means devoid of erudition; but he preferred to bring into the field against the too self-assertive youngsters the wisdom of life rather than the lore of letters. He probably saw, what is indeed all too visible, the tendency, ever increasing, to believe that all knowledge worth attainment can be sooner or later acquired from books; that for the educated there is a 'royal road' to that learning which the so-called ignorant attain by slow labour and attention; that they can, in short, learn facts through the medium of words, and never soil their fingers by actual contact with things.

This idea is instilled into many of us all too early. We receive as gifts the *Amateur Mechanic* and similar instructors; and we pore over the knowledge therein contained very much at our ease, and learn—in theory—many useful arts. And it is not until we are launched on the sea of practice that we find ourselves driven after all to consult the genuine craftsman in person—the carpenter or blacksmith, who *shows* us—he is not over good at talking—just those little points and details which go to make the successful whole. Lucky for us if we take the lesson to heart then and there, and are convinced that we cannot go comfortably through life upon theories, but require

a firm foundation on the solid bed-rock of experience. It is a day of handbooks and handbook knowledge; and handbooks are dangerous things. One is quite sure that the new boy described in *Vice Versa*, who, while his fellows played football with more or less vigour, walked about the field diligently studying the 'Laws and Regulations of the Game of Football,' would never be of any use in a 'scrum' or run a clever 'touch-down'!

Childish fancies and imaginations are not always to be blushing put aside by the full-grown worldling; chance may throw a gold coin into an infant's mud-pie. Few children of average reading but have heard of a shipwreck, a lonely island, and the subsequent fascinating experiences of the castaways; and few of any imagination but have wished themselves of the party and have pictured their own doings with never-ending delight. It possibly never strikes them, but it may with advantage strike us, how great a revolution might be worked in a little community by a realisation of this oft-told tale. Let us suppose, then, the shipwreck and the island, and a party of ten survivors: a bishop, a Q.C., a university don, a doctor, and a reporter—all learned men, you see, comparatively speaking, and their theoretical knowledge comprising a vast amount of ancient and modern lore; and the other five a carpenter, two agricultural labourers—'general workmen' they would be called in some parts of the country—a 'navy,' and a railway porter.

I need not enlarge upon the result; the reader sees the point without my dwelling on it further. In this revolution of existence, when each one of these castaways would have to begin life again under conditions so different to those in which they had grown up, with what a very different gauge positions in life and values of rank would require to be judged! I do not say that there, among themselves, there would be any such immediate reversal of judgment, or that those five members of the 'working classes' would say at once to their fellow-unfortunates, 'You perceive, of course, that we are now the members of the community on whom the comfort and safety of all depend; please, therefore, in future, treat us accordingly, respect us accordingly, and address us accordingly;' though we may incline to hope that those five cultivated and refined men would see the justice of such a request before it was made, and would feel and act in accordance with it. The demand would, I repeat, in all likelihood never be made; for there is an innate modesty in the working man, however agitators may have done their best to drive it out of him, which leads him to believe in the theory of his 'betters.'

For, indeed, those five first-mentioned men, each no doubt with a college education at his back, would probably cut but poor figures in the everyday circumstances of the life they would be so

suddenly required to lead. The doctor would perhaps feel most at his ease; there might be wounds and bruises sustained in getting ashore; there would always be the possibility of illness; he is one whom no member of the little party could ever feel to be *de trop*. Besides, a doctor has 'fingers,' in the sense in which a good driver is said to have 'hands;' the man who can guide a lancet and dress a wound might be depended on for other handiwork. The bishop too: we would hope that he would be welcome; that he would know how to make himself welcome and honoured even though his hand should be soft and his arm unused to that daily labour which would in all likelihood be so needful to life and comfort.

But for the don and the lawyer. Of what use would be their long-sought and hard-earned knowledge; the scholar's dead languages and the Q.C.'s wide legal experience—his cases and judgments and precedents? And that member of the fourth estate—the reporter—he who is supposed to know something of everything—by hearsay. Alas for him now! Better to have handled a spade than to have penned exhaustive agricultural articles. He has inspected many a factory and workshop. Can he make shift to sharpen an edged tool or to drive a rusty nail through leather? For these will be useful accomplishments.

This one-sidedness of knowledge and attainments is doubtless for many of us a necessary evil; but a crying evil it is, and one to be diligently avoided where possible. The more a man excels in head-knowledge, in the erudition of words, so much the more should he strive to preserve his equilibrium by a balance of solid mechanical skill. Let him pass at regular intervals to the carpenter's bench or to the forge; better still to the open air and the care of plants or animals, be it only to pottering with a few square yards of flower-border or a pair of bantams.

Plants and animals are better still I say, because, while the occupations of the workshop can be adjusted by rule and square, Nature has eccentricities of her own which the amateur will have to discover as he proceeds. Roughly speaking, books may perhaps be said to give us rules; Nature provides the exceptions. Take as an instance in point the poultry-yard; the reader, bearing in mind my present anxieties, will be lenient if I return still to this topic. Your 'manual' gives elaborate instructions as to the proper kind of roosting-perch and the best kind of nest, and cautions you about the exclusion of draughts from the fowl-house. Then comes experience and shows you that *your* hens happen to prefer a roost in the apple-tree, and, scouting your dearly bought or laboriously constructed nest-boxes, choose a broken hamper wherein to place their eggs.

Carlyle, his wholesome Scotch soul abhorrent

of dirt, took bass-broom and bucket from the weakly servant, and swilled and brushed the 'area' of the Cheyne Row home till he was satisfied with its appearance; and no one will doubt that not only the large-heartedness that prompted the action, but also the ability to turn his hand successfully to such a 'matter of the house,' was a part of his character for which he and the world were alike the better.

There are too many of us who have never taken hold of life save with gloved hands. We are too ignorant of the real *feel* of things—the naked touch. We expect to find a handle by which to grasp our daily tasks, and we are woefully nonplussed when it is absent. The unlettered man, the man of the masses, on the contrary, is more used to taking things as they are and making the best of them. As a consequence he has expedients and ways and means ready for sudden emergencies.

There is such a vast amount of important knowledge in this world which it seems utterly impossible, for no very apparent reason, to reduce to black and white. Take the art of cooking for an example. I have heard of some few good cookery-books; never of a really perfect and reliable one. All my friends to whom I have applied for statistics on the subject decline to place implicit trust in any of them. The flow of information seems apt to fail at critical junctures; the specification of quantities lapses into vagueness; the writer veils his—or her—meaning in such terms as 'a little,' 'sufficient,' and the like. So that it seems that, however one's culinary education may be 'finished' by means of these well-intentioned manuals, there is necessary a previous 'grounding' by experience and oral tradition.

Who has not admired the 'magic fingers' of the working classes?—the deft housemaid, who lays and lights in a few minutes the obstinate fire with which we have struggled for an hour and more; the little stable-lad who 'bits' in a twinkling the restive horse that has awed us with laid-back ears and fidgety heels. These are moments when the average man who is ignorant of all kinds of manual dexterity, whose livelihood lies in his pen or his tongue, feels himself—or should feel himself—lumbered to the ground.

William Godwin is said to have divided men into two classes: those who had written a book and those who had not. Without going so far as to accept this distinction with a reversed estimate of his divisions, it does appear that better standards might be found. Perhaps already the high-water mark of public opinion as to the all-powerfulness of mere book-learning has been reached. There are not wanting army reformers who suggest that something more is required for the young officer than the ability to pass a difficult examination. The pendulum has

swung perhaps to an opposite extreme as to the proper place of games in school life; but no doubt an ultimate mean will be found. Hazlitt's dictum that any one who, having passed the prescribed course of a classical education without being made a fool thereby, should congratulate himself on a narrow escape, may be an unpleasant way of placing more than a grain of truth before the learned world.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES:

THE DAYS OF LONG AGO.

Beside the Christmas fire

There passeth, as in dream,
All sight and sound that touched us,
All shadows on Life's stream
That rusheth now so swiftly
To the tideless ocean's flow.
Oh! the music of its ripple
In the days of long ago!

Beside the Christmas fire

Again we see the light
Of the old dear home, so distant,
And yet so near to-night.
And we were once those children
Who shouted in the snow,
And fed the robin-redbreasts
In the days of long ago.

Beside the Christmas fire

The shadows still pass on,
And childhood's happy valley
And careless heart are gone.
But oh! the hopes that beckon,
The beacon-lights that glow—
Swift foot and heart undaunted
In the days of long ago.

Beside the Christmas fire

We see the path divide;
One step—and no returning
For swelling of the tide.
One tryst—the great Hereafter—
That meeting-place must know,
All lightly as we missed it
In the days of long ago.

Beside the Christmas fire

If sometimes Life may seem
The shadow of a shadow
And a dream within a dream;
Hark to the Christmas anthem
Which comes across the snow!
It links fair life and endless
With the days of long ago.

MARY GORGES.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

VOICE AND SPEECH.

SPEAKING is an art, and requires to be learnt. This is true of mere speaking or talking, which is begun to be learnt in infancy. It is true of conversation, which is less or more systematic talking. And it is true, with emphasis, of elocution, which comprises public speaking and recitation—the latter with or without book. It is with the two kindred arts, public speaking and recitation, that we are concerned in this article; and, incidentally, with conversation. The three of them require a similar training of the voice. It has been said that training for public speaking is unnecessary. All that the preacher, for example, has to do is to be natural. Natural, to be sure. But to be natural in a position so unnatural, so artificial, in fact, as addressing a public meeting needs the training of art. For all art is nature trained according to requirement.

The instrument of the speaker's art is the voice. But the voice is the organ of speech in a sense different from that in which the eye is the organ of sight, the ear the organ of hearing. Seeing is the primary and sole function of the eye, hearing of the ear. But the voice is produced by organs which own a function prior to speaking. The lungs, the windpipe, the throat, the mouth, the nose, have functions to discharge essential to life—breathing and feeding—before and over and above speaking. The voice is an extra use to which they are put—a use found out by man, subject to his will, and therefore liable to abuse. The eye and the ear are not subject to the control of our wills in the discharge of their functions. Training of the ear and eye is not manipulation of those organs. Their machinery is too delicate for us to meddle with. The training so called is rather a bringing of the mind to perceive what the ear and the eye are offering to our attention. But the voice, a secondary product of its organs, can be manipulated by us; can be deepened, strengthened, mellowed, sweetened; and it lends itself readily to such ameliorations.

And we might be apt to suppose that there would be universally, at least among the educated classes, an eager emulation in making the best of the voice. A good voice always secures consideration, confers distinction. Not to refer only to public speaking, in company, at table, in the drawing-room, we all look up when a voice of power, a voice low and sweet like that of one of the heroines of song, greets the ear. Shakespeare speaks of a good voice as an ornament fit even to deceive. Bassanio, commenting gravely on the caskets before he makes the choice which is to determine his fate of fortune or misfortune, says:

The world is still deceived with ornament:
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil!

A doubtful recommendation, truly; but what good may it not do when it can even 'obscure' evil?

This being so, we should reasonably expect that a great deal of attention would be habitually bestowed on the voice. It is not so. A bad voice is the rule. The voices of most people are all out of order. A good voice is commonly considered, like personal beauty, to be a rare and exceptional gift of the special grace of Providence. And yet the character of the voice is a survival formed or malformed by our own care or negligence.

Cicero in his great work *De Oratore* makes Antonius, one of the maintainers of the learned dialogue, mention incidentally the lengthened, severe, and constant training of the voice undergone by the Greek tragedians, who, he says, as a preliminary training, 'declaim in a sitting position for several years,' and after they have entered the profession, 'every day, in a reclining position, exercise the voice by raising it tone by tone to the highest pitch; and then, in a sitting position, let it sink from the highest tone to the lowest.'

Macaulay tells us in the *Life of William Pitt* which he contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, that he (the younger Pitt) 'had been carefully trained from infancy in the art of managing his voice—

a voice naturally clear and deep-toned. His father, whose oratory owed no small part of its effect to that art, had been a most skilful and judicious instructor.' The elder Pitt, the Great Commoner, as he was called, training the voice of his greater son is an historical picture of great educational significance.

If it is true that the invention of printing has mightily prevented the training of the voice in modern times, the fact only affirms that blessings may be diluted as well as disguised. But the press has not suppressed the stage; and better-trained voices would lessen the risk of its permanently weakening the influence of the pulpit. What more noble use to put a well-trained voice to than giving out God's mercy and truth?

There are many calls in our day for change in educational methods. More science and less time devoted to the Greek and Roman classics in our great schools; more geography and better methods of teaching it. Not to specify further, we think a claim could be maintained for the education of the voice—a claim social, æsthetical, ecclesiastical, political, not to say commercial—the urgency of which would render the maintenance of it a duty to society easily acknowledged. A well-trained voice sweetens the intercourse of social conversation—a great blessing to confer on society. Imitation, the bond of society, carries on its effort after unifying to the utmost in voice and speech. The articulation, tone, pronunciation of parents, pastors, teachers, and esteemed associates are imitable. It is a duty on their part to offer for imitation a voice that is good, in order that their fond imitators may, in the matter of voice and speech, abhor that which is evil. The Rev. J. P. Sandlands, in his admirable book, *The Voice and Public Speaking*, says: 'With such a language as ours—rich, full, powerful as it is—we ought to be a nation of orators. Here, as it appears to me, we indicate a line of conduct the pursuit of which will give ample scope for a vast amount of patriotism. I do not think that a greater good can be effected than by enforcing attention to these things. It means power.'

The elocution of many school children, probably because of the multiplicity of subjects by which their attention is absorbed, is often very defective. This has not escaped notice in high quarters, as a recent circular from the Education Department demands that the children in elementary schools shall be taught to read with 'intelligence and expression.' It is a step in the right direction. Even the amateur elocutionist may have a mission in elevating the taste of a section of the public, although his own training is sometimes carried on at the expense of his audience. Than the work of the finished elocutionist declaiming passages from good authors, with force, tenderness, and the true dramatic instinct, there are few greater or more profitable public entertainments. Shades of meaning are brought out and duly accentuated

that were missed in the private reading. There is much perhaps in the enforced calmness and expectancy of the gathering to help the reader or reciter. How universal is the taste for such entertainment is shown by the appreciation of such books as *Chambers's Elocution*, edited by Mr R. C. H. Morison, with its valuable introduction on reading and public speaking, and its excellent selection of pieces for reading and recitation. For this same public a *New Reciter*, with a fresh selection of pieces, by the same editor, has just been prepared.

Let us assume it to be granted that the training of the voice is a duty; and now let us address ourselves to the kind of training required, and how it is to be carried on. The kind and method of training depend no doubt on the structure of the organ to be trained. But scientific knowledge of physiology and the anatomy of the voice has not been found to be of avail in the practical art of training the voice. It would be a strong thing to say that it was a waste of time to impart physiological and anatomical knowledge to students of the art of speaking. The acquirement of sound knowledge is never a waste of time. But in training the voice such knowledge is a detail that can be dispensed with while the best results are produced. A champion runner does not reach his athletic eminence by knowledge of the anatomy of his limbs.

The voice is produced by various organs which, as we have said, have functions of life to discharge before and above speaking. These are the lungs, the windpipe, the throat, the mouth. The lungs are the bellows of this wonderful organ, viewed as a wind instrument. For it is both a wind, a string, and a reed instrument. It is of the nature of all the sounding instruments, and is superior to each of them. We live by breathing, and we must breathe wisely to speak well. Speaking is a use of the lungs which human beings have found out. The breathing to live is of the same nature as the function of the eye or the ear. The breathing to speak has to be learnt if speaking is to be done well. To manage the breath properly is the first requirement of the art of speaking. To compress and condense the air in the lungs, and then to force it straight at the vocal organ in the throat is to manage the breath properly. It is an artificial process. There is deep breathing, called diaphragmatic or abdominal breathing; there is broad or wide breathing, called rib-breathing; and there is shallow breathing, called collar-bone-breathing. The full explanation of breathing must be left for the instructor. Suffice it to say that deep breathing is the only possible breathing for true use of the voice. Sound must come without breath. Breath coming with the sound exhausts itself too soon, and it makes the sound harsh. You have only to try it to become conscious of how the tone is affected by it. Mr Sandlands tells us of a very good hint he got

on this point. Hold a lighted candle before your mouth while you are giving forth the sound. If the flame flickers there is breath with the sound. The flame will not flicker if there is only sound.

Stand at ease without restraint on throat, chest, or limbs while you are going through breathing gymnastics.

The next organ in order is the windpipe. It is merely mentioned in passing. For, though the windpipe and its tubes—the bronchial tubes—by which it coalesces with the lungs, are important factors in voice-production, we have next to no voluntary control over them. Such ailments as bronchitis and asthma remind us how much more habitually careful we ought to be of the windpipe and its nether tubes than any of us are while we are sound in healthy breathing. The best we can do for them to keep them in good vocal condition is to observe assiduously the habit of nostril breathing when not speaking.

Next in order upwards and outwards—that is, in the throat—is the distinctive organ of voice, the larynx, called by Behnke the voice-box. The larynx, while it is specially the organ of voice, is also, owing to its marvellous power of adjustment, peculiarly under the control of our wills. Voice, produced in the larynx and manipulated by the mouth and nose, reaches our ears as song or speech. It is with speech that we have to do in this article. Speech makes free and effective use of consonantal, aspirate, and guttural sounds which song will not tolerate. It does not require so free and open a passage for the breath as song; it is not confined to the notes of a scale. There is steadying of the vocal organ before we begin to sing which is not required for speech, and this explains why a stammerer in speech can sing without stammering. By steadying the vocal organ he prevents the stammer.

The larynx has been compared to a wind, a reed, and a stringed instrument. The comparison of it to a violin gave rise to the not very accurate phrase 'vocal cords,' as the name of the two cushions which are its most prominent features. But no string so short as those 'vocal cords' could produce a musical bass note. In fact, the comparison of the larynx to any instrument which produces only musical tones is inadequate, to begin with. There is no instrument but the larynx which produces both song and speech; and as those comparisons view the larynx merely as a producer of musical sounds, we have no further concern with them at present. Besides, the voice can be trained for speech, elocution, and oratory without a knowledge of the physiology of the larynx. We have the power of adjusting the larynx; of varying the tension of its cords, cushions, or ligaments, as they have been variously called. We can do these things without scientific technical knowledge of how they are done, without any knowledge at all of vocal physiology; and it is the work of the trainer

of the voice to teach his pupils—or her pupils, we may be allowed to say—how to do them.

It must be kept distinctly in view that all the confused discussions about register—Mr Curwen's thick, thin, and small register, for example—have reference to the voice of song, not to the voice of speech. Mr Behnke says: 'A very babel of confusion exists on this important subject. . . . People talk of chest, medium, mixed, throat, falsetto, and head registers, and these terms being utterly unscientific—that is, being based on sensations and fancies instead of physiological facts—no one can give a clear and satisfactory definition of any one of them.' It is exactly those 'sensations and fancies' that the skilful trainer of the voice for speech takes full advantage of. Even from Mr Behnke's entirely musical point of view, the sensations and fancies can be profitably utilised—for training the song-voice, I mean. But Mr Sandlands, who treats of the voice merely as a speaking instrument, says: 'We often hear the expressions "head-voice," "chest-voice," "throat-voice," &c. . . . We must discard these terms.' Now, these are very instructive terms. There is no doubt that, as he says, 'we have but one organ of voice, and that is not in our head or chest, but in our throat.' But it should not be overlooked that when certain tones are produced in that one organ of voice, which is in the throat, we have a sensation in the head or chest, as the case may be, which invariably attends those particular tones. There is an affection, feeling, sensation, or fancy of which the trainer of the voice avails himself.

For speaking purposes we all have four voices, and they are distinguished by the locality of an attendant sensation.

There is the upper head-voice and the lower head-voice, the upper chest-voice and the lower chest-voice.

Now, in training the voice for speaking purposes, the first requisite is to get the ear to distinguish those four voices readily. The aim of the voice-trainer is to teach his pupils to have them at command as use requires in speech, reading, and reciting. It will readily be seen that the ear requires to be trained (simply by being made to listen) as we go on. In the rapid change from one 'voice' to another flexibility is necessary—flexibility of the larynx, as rapid enunciation requires flexibility of the tongue.

To touch on the endless points necessary in the perfect training of a voice would overstep the possible length of this article. One voice has one defect, one another; and so upon the knowledge and perception of the trainer the correction rests.

If some interest has been raised in this too much neglected subject we should feel glad, and hope that all will remember they possess this finest of all instruments in their own throat; and if they have not the voice of an orator, at least they can make life more endurable for those around them by the true use of their voice.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER VI.—THE GOLDEN LILY.



WARNER and Revel spent a very bad day. At the very moment when their scheme was on the point of success, the cup was dashed from their lips by sinister fortune, and they found themselves in a worse case than they had ever before been in.

It was late in the evening when they straggled back to Davies Street. They were both the worse for a good deal of drink—stupefied and depressed, rather than intoxicated. Brandy had no power to elevate them, even temporarily, above their troubles.

They flung themselves in two chairs in the dining-room in moody silence.

'Open a bottle of champagne, Warner,' said Revel after a while. 'That brandy makes my head ache. You have some left, haven't you?'

'Yes, there is some left. None of it is paid for, though.'

'It won't taste the worse for that.'

The bottle was opened, and each of them swallowed a tumblerful at a draught.

'I tell you what, Warner,' said Revel, a little revived by the wine; 'we must cable out to the manager to ask what he means. Matters may be mended yet. Who knows?'

'I doubt it. How much will a cable cost?'

Revel took a mining code-book and worked out a message.

'We can do it in three words,' he replied. 'With the address, that will make four—nineteen shillings. We can manage that, I suppose.'

'Very well. Nine-and-sixpence each,' said Warner sourly. 'It was now come to this, that an expenditure of nineteen shillings was so serious a matter that it was necessary to divide it. What are you going to say in three words?'

'This,' answered Revel, reading from the draft he had made. 'First, "What do you mean by your cable of this date?" Second, "Counteract at once by a more encouraging report." Third, "This is most urgent; telegraph immediately." That will do, won't it?'

'Very well; send it off. We shall have an answer to-morrow.'

Revel went out at once to despatch the cable, saying he would return. Warner sat for some time alone thinking over the situation. Unless some better news came from the mine all was up. This he perceived plainly; and he had little hope of better news. Not only had he no money, but he had a good many debts. That repayment of the trust money had been an accursed stroke of bad luck. If he only had the three thousand pounds he had been compelled to hand over to Hulne he could get away without difficulty. It

was a hard problem to solve how he should get away now.

And there was his daughter. She would be no acquisition to Revel now. Revel would not have her. What could he do with her? He was in as bad a situation as Warner himself. He was not so much in debt, perhaps; but debts were no part of the trouble. They sat lightly on Warner's mind. Then, as he thought of his daughter, he remembered he had not seen her since coming in. She must be in the drawing-room, reading.

Now, the idea the man began to revolve in his mind was, what use he could make of the girl in the present emergency. In Coolgardie she had done well as a barmaid, but that was out of the question in London. Eight or ten shillings a week would be very little use to him. She possessed beauty, and could sing well. He wondered whether she could get on at the music halls. Handsome girls, with moderate talent, were sometimes paid large salaries. The idea took hold of him. He opened another bottle of champagne, and the fumes of the wine filled his brain with flattering visions. Could Lily dance? he wondered. If not, a few lessons would supply the deficiency. He thought that any music-hall manager, inspecting her face and figure, would consider it worth his while to take her in hand. That there was any degradation in the thing never entered the man's head. There was money in it—and money was the object.

He resolved he would say nothing to Revel about this. Revel might now go his own way—indeed, he would have to do so, and immediately; and Warner would exploit his daughter for his own exclusive benefit. She had obediently taken to the laborious occupation of a barmaid at Coolgardie. The more attractive profession of a music-hall artiste, with its high remuneration, its stimulating excitements, and agreeable dissipation, would, he felt convinced, fascinate her at once.

He concluded, filled with wine and well pleased with the prospect, that he would have a talk with her on the subject at once. It was as well to lose no time, and, in truth, there was no time to lose. They should have to clear out of these apartments without delay, leaving rent and bills unpaid, and lie low in some other quarter of London. And money was a pressing necessity.

He went to the drawing-room. To his surprise, his daughter was not there. He glanced around, with half-drunken eyes, thinking she might be nestling on a chair or couch in some

corner. But she was not. Then, as he approached the fireplace to touch the button of the electric bell, he saw a letter standing against the clock on the mantelpiece. It was addressed to himself, in Lily's handwriting.

'What the deuce have we now?' he asked himself, tearing it open and sitting down to read it. After a perusal of the letter Warner felt considerably soberer.

FATHER.—Going into the dining-room last evening, I was stopped at the door by a conversation between Mr Revel and yourself. From this I learned that you had offered me as a gift to Mr Revel at Adelaide, and that he had refused to take me. Then you and he made a compact at Coolgardie in connection with the mine, by which Mr Revel understood that I was to form a part of his share. This you repudiated, and agreed to sell me to him for eight thousand shares.

Father, I willingly submitted to the degradation of working as a barmaid at Coolgardie in order to provide you with the means of living. But you are entirely mistaken in me if you suppose I will submit to be sold to Mr Revel as a chattel. Under no conceivable circumstances would I consent to become the wife of a man of Mr Revel's known character. Similarly, under no circumstances will I ever consent to live with you as your daughter again. You have forfeited every claim to my duty. I now quit this place and you, taking nothing with me but what I am wearing. It will be useless for you to try to follow me. I will not come back to you again. LILIAN WARNER.

'By heaven,' was Warner's exclamation, 'I never imagined that was in her!'

He went slowly back to the other room, and resumed drinking. There was no doubt in his mind that the girl meant every word, and would adhere to her resolution. Whither she had gone he did not trouble to speculate. It was all one; she had renounced him. That was the central fact, that hit him like a sledge-hammer. He swallowed tumblerful after tumblerful of wine; but he might as well have been swallowing water. The wine was impotent over his stunned brain. All his castles in the air were strewn in the dust.

Revel came in, after despatching the cable.

'What's the matter, Warner?' he asked, looking at the other. 'Are you drunk?'

'No,' was the savage answer. 'You infernal idiot! you were not sober enough last evening to see the girl standing at the door, listening to our conversation about her.'

Revel started.

'Read that!' exclaimed Warner, throwing the letter to him. 'There's a pretty compliment in it for yourself.'

Revel read the letter with lowering face. He did not want the girl now, but he did not want to lose her while there was any hope. And he had still some hope. He felt that cut in her letter about himself; but the feeling it inspired in him was vindictive rather than indignant. If matters turned out favourably yet, he would force her to marry him; he would resort to any violence, any

outrage, to compel her submission. Then she should pay for it!

'Where do you suppose she has gone?' he asked quietly.

'How should I know?'

After a pause Revel asked again, 'What is her age?'

'She is old enough to be her own mistress, if that's what you have in your mind. You may give her up, Revel. If she was here now, and you had a million to settle upon her, she would not have you.'

'I am not so sure,' said Revel, with a dark grin. 'Perhaps you will be of a different mind in twenty-four hours. I have sent that cable, and something tells me the mine will be all right yet.'

These two men not being agreeable company, we will leave them to spend their evening together, and pass on to the next day. No reply came to them from the manager of the mine. They waited feverishly until four o'clock, when their anxiety became so tense that they decided to drive into the City and ascertain if there was any news at the office.

The directors were sitting in the board-room. The silence with which the two vendors were received and the looks the directors wore were ominous.

'Any fresh news?' Warner inquired, with an effort at indifference.

'There have been several cables since yesterday,' the chairman replied, 'not only from the manager, but from independent sources. They all concur in stating that the mine is worthless. We have, consequently, stopped all work, and have resolved to call a meeting of shareholders to pass a resolution of liquidation.'

'For what date is the meeting called?'

'The twenty-fifth. We hope, Mr Warner, that you and Mr Revel will attend. No doubt you will see fit to refund the ten thousand pounds you have received on account of the purchase. No blame will or can be attached to you if you take this course.'

'Oh, we will certainly do that,' said Warner, laughing. 'Good-day to you, gentlemen.'

Of course they did not attend the meeting. Loud and angry calls for them were made by indignant shareholders, but the calls were in vain. The company went into liquidation. After all, owing to the refusal of the directors to complete the payment of the purchase consideration, the shareholders did not lose much. With the exception of the ten thousand pounds paid to Warner and Revel, and a few hundreds expended on the mine, their money all lay at the bank. Many of the original shareholders had sold their shares when the latter rose to a premium, and those who bought them had done so on the speculation of a further rise. No great sympathy, therefore, was evoked by their loss.

The handsome rooms in Davies Street and Mount Street were evacuated by their tenants under the shadow of night. The worthy pair did not separate, after all. They seemed to be necessary to each other. In a quiet southern suburb they planted themselves, under new names, and soon evolved a scheme of replenishing their impoverished exchequer. This was done by a system of swindling advertisements, requiring deposits for promised situations and other allurements—a very common form of fraud, but rarely an unsuccessful one. The business made a change of residence advisable from time to time; but it was going on pretty fairly, when one of the financial newspapers provided them with a sensation of a peculiarly painful and mortifying character.

It was Revel whose eye was first caught by the heading of the article. What it reminded him of need not be further explained when it is stated that the heading referred to was:

‘THE GOLDEN LILY MINE.’

Revel, in the first flush of his surprise, had begun to read the article aloud to his companion. After a little he began to stammer and hesitate. Warner, perceiving this, snatched the paper from him, and read it through in silence with changing countenance. At the conclusion he drew a long breath and laid the newspaper upon his knee.

‘By heaven,’ he exclaimed, ‘it’s a terrible sell! But you are a greater rascal than ever I thought you were, Revel; and that’s saying a good deal.’

‘What would your virtuous principles have led you to do under the same circumstances, Warner?’

‘I don’t know,’ replied the other absently. ‘But you were cookey that Jim Solus was dead.’

‘And eaten. Yes; and so would you have been if you had seen him.’

‘Perhaps so. Another instance of our accursed luck, which seems to dog us at every step. What have we done, Mark, to be so infernally unlucky?’

‘Nothing that I know of,’ was the innocent reply. ‘But that thing’—he indicated the newspaper—‘beats me hollow.’

‘I never heard anything like it before,’ said Warner, with a sigh. ‘What an ignorant, incompetent idiot that mine manager was! If he had only known enough to make this discovery we should be rich men to-day.’

The story told in the newspaper, as telegraphed from Coolgardie, was as follows: Some months ago two adventurers, by name Warner and Revel, were hanging about Coolgardie. An old miner, James Gaverick, or Jim Solus, as he was called, had started on a prospecting expedition to a hitherto unexplored district on a line east of Twenty-five Mile. When Gaverick had been some weeks away Revel started after him. He found

poor Gaverick, whose condenser had been broken, dying naked in the bush from thirst. Instead of trying to save the man’s life, Revel searched his clothes, and found a map marked at a place about five miles off. Here he discovered a claim marked off by Jim Gaverick, and called the ‘Golden Lily.’ He tore off Jim’s notice and substituted one of his own, altering the name to ‘Revel’s Find.’ A lease was obtained, and a company floated in London. But the mine, after being worked for a time, was pronounced to be worthless. It was abandoned, and the company wound up.

But some miners, on their way through the bush from Hannan’s Field to Murchison’s, chanced to pass that way, and discovered poor Jim. They did what they could for him, got his clothes on, and put him in their cart. At Murchison’s there was a doctor, and a barnmaid nursed him. After a long time he came round, and returning to Coolgardie, learned what had happened in regard to his claim. He was disheartened considerably, too, by the fact that a recent arrival, a youth from England to whom he had become strongly attached, had gone back in the belief that his friend was dead.

For a month or so Gaverick hung about Coolgardie, until he received a letter from England that seemed to cheer him up. Then came the news that ‘Revel’s Find’ was abandoned. Jim lost no time in taking possession of it again and obtaining a lease. And here came the sensational part of the story. After some fresh shaft-sinking and cross-cutting the ‘Golden Lily’ (as Gaverick once more christened the mine) was discovered to be rich in telluride, every sample taken out yielding over thirty ounces of gold to the ton. A rush had set in to stake off claims around the ‘Golden Lily,’ and hundreds of miners were already working on the field.

This was all pleasant matter for Warner and Revel to sleep upon!

‘I never thought, Dicky,’ said Mr Gaverick one day in the City office, ‘to have anything to do with a gold-mine. But this one of Jim’s is an exception. We must attend to it for him.’

‘Poor, dear old Jim! Mr Gaverick, don’t you think you could induce him to come home? If he doesn’t I believe I shall be impelled to go out to Coolgardie to see him.’

‘Wait a bit, Dicky. Don’t be in a hurry to go to Coolgardie. If you were sick again there who would nurse you?’

The young man coloured.

‘Jim will come home as soon as everything is in full blast at the mine. I know he will. Meantime I have been consulting some experienced men about floating the mine. We’ll have a capable board of directors; no hacks will be on it. You might as well take the secretaryship, Dicky; Jim would be so pleased, you know.

I'll go on the board myself, though I don't know much about these things.'

'I hope Jim will get a good price for the property, Mr Gaverick. It is well worth it.'

'They tell me he ought to get a hundred and twenty thousand, in cash and shares. There will be thirty thousand more for working capital—more than enough, they say, as the mine already pays its expenses, with only a few men working.'

When 'The Golden Lily, Limited,' was brought out, the fame of its wealth had already become so widespread that there was a rush for the shares. Foremost in the rush were the old shareholders of the defunct 'Revel's Find.' In a few days the shares were at a high premium. There was no delay about settling the purchase consideration in this case. As attorney for his brother, Mr Gaverick received fifty thousand pounds in cash and seventy thousand in shares.

One Saturday forenoon, bright with tempting sunshine that was drawing the thoughts of many a City worker to the pleasant country, Dicky Hulme, now secretary of the 'Golden Lily Company,' was putting away his books and papers for the weekend, when Mr Gaverick came in.

'Here, Dicky!' he exclaimed, holding out a piece of paper. 'Here's news for you. Old Jim is coming home!'

Hulme's heart leaped. He read the telegram with eager eyes:

'Everything going on splendidly at mine. Have sold seven thousand ounces of gold. Send no more money out for working expenses. Am sailing for home in a week.'

'Well, Mr Gaverick, it's the best news I have heard since the news of Jim being alive and well. I hope he will tell us the name of the ship. I'll go to meet him.'

'And what will you do to-day and to-morrow?' inquired Mr Gaverick, sitting down. 'I am myself going to Buckinghamshire to see my sister Molly. I haven't seen her now for three months; and she will want to hear about Jim. What do you intend to do?' he repeated. 'It would be losing a chance to stay in London this weather.'

Hulme had not thought upon the subject, and did not answer at once. Perhaps, too, he suspected what Mr Gaverick was driving at; for, in truth, although he fancied himself very deep and clever, Mr Gaverick was the most transparent of men.

'Come down to Buckinghamshire,' said Mr Gaverick, letting his voice drop a little. 'Dicky, you have never been there since—since the girl went. Is that right, now?'

'I don't know, Mr Gaverick,' was the answer, uneasily spoken. 'You see, she has some peculiar notion about me—I don't know what. I would have gone often enough if I were not under the impression that—she would rather I didn't.'

'The world is changing sadly. In my young days we would have asked a girl, straight, what

she had in her mind. Not that I ever did, of course, not knowing how to read or write. I wasn't fit for such things. Jim, now,' he continued contemplatively—'Jim went to a night-school, and could read and write a bit. But not enough, not enough,' said he, shaking his head sadly.

'Was poor Jim in love, then?' the young man ventured to ask. He was deeply interested in the question, for he remembered Jim's counsel to himself in Coolgardie, and his thought at the time that Jim must have been left without the stimulus which he was recommending to Hulme.

'Yes, poor Jim was. But at a great distance, you will understand. She was as far above him as a star in the sky. She never knew it, of course. But that didn't prevent Jim giving his whole heart to her.'

'What a pity she did not know it! There is no better heart in the world than Jim's, Mr Gaverick.'

'That's true. All the same, it couldn't alter things. Jim would have killed himself rather than let her know it.'

'Surely the knowledge could never have offended her?'

'No—I think not; she was too gentle and good. It might have made her unhappy, though.'

'Yes, yes—I understand. Just like Jim! Is she alive now?'

'No,' said the old gentleman, looking very wistfully at Hulme; 'no; she is dead.'

The colour slowly mounted to Hulme's temples and faded away again. He turned his face away, for there were tears standing in his eyes. The secret flashed upon his consciousness, in connection with a chance word which Jim had once dropped in Coolgardie. It was Dicky Hulme's mother! Poor old Jim!

'I think you are a young ass, Mr Dicky,' said Mr Gaverick, altering his tone. 'Come down and see the girl. She is an honest lass, and if anything is the matter she will tell you for asking. I don't think there's anything the matter, except your own shyness. You are afraid of her.'

There was some truth in this—very ancient truth; for what youth ever was in love with a maiden but he was afraid of her—in awe of her? Maidenhood is a very potent and fear-inspiring influence.

Hulme smiled at the suggestion, feeling none the less the force of it. He felt, also, that it had been very ungracious of him never to have gone to see her; very unfair, perhaps, not to have given her an opportunity of explaining her mind to him. She could not be expected to do so unasked. And here was Jim coming home to England!

'Very well, Mr Gaverick. I will come with you.'

'That's all right,' said Mr Gaverick. 'Let us be off. I'll send a telegram ahead, if you write it out for me.'

SALMON-CANNING IN THE FAR WEST.



THE discovery of gold on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains, and more recently in Klondike, has had the effect of drawing attention to the much-neglected district of British Columbia. A few travellers who have crossed by the Canadian Pacific Railway to Vancouver have brought back accounts of its forests and scenery, and perhaps of its mineral wealth; but, as a general rule, but little has been written of this remote colony, isolated by great mountain ranges from the rest of Canada. One of the greatest industries of the country has been the capture and export of salmon. The valuable discovery of preserving perishable articles of food in hermetically sealed tins—or cans, as they are called in the West—has enabled the Columbians, from the abundance of their supplies, to send salmon to all parts of the world. Thirty years ago a British labourer probably never saw this choice fish, unless, possibly, in the fishmonger's shop, when he went into the town on market-day; now he may, for about sixpence, enjoy salmon at his dinner, and has almost ceased to regard it as a luxury.

Being on the west coast of North America a short time ago, I made a trip up the Columbia river for the express purpose of seeing all I could of the whole process, from the catching of the salmon to its being fastened down for export. On a well-found steamer the journey should be very enjoyable. One is sure to fall in with a number of fellow-passengers ready to impart information about the country, and he will not talk long with one of these Americans without hearing something worth remembering. They are all civil and obliging to the Britisher if approached in the right way. The only rudeness I met with while travelling in the States was from the coloured 'gentlemen.' The scenery is both grand and fine. High mountains rise on both sides, their spurs coming down to, and appearing to close in, the river in front and behind. Pines in some places grow so closely together that their tops seem to be struggling upwards for sun and air; while in others a solitary specimen will be seen clinging in desperation to the bare rock, from which there seems no possible nourishment to be drawn. The moss, lichen, and ferns on these grim rocks produce pleasing tints and various shades of colour. Here and there can be detected the columnar basalt, cropping out in its rigid formation so well known to those who have visited Staffa. Often one might, without any violent stretch of the imagination, mistake these regularly formed rocks for some mountain fastness or the remnants of a ruined castle.

Where the mountain-sides have been worn down and some stream has opened out a smiling glen,

the Indians can be seen with nets and spears gathering their harvest from the water. For the fish caught now will form their chief article of diet during the long, cold winter months. Their forefathers, for hundreds of years before the pale-face appeared, having been dependent on this pursuit, they are, of course, adepts in the art of capturing fish. As he stands upon some prominent rock, the Indian's practised eye will quickly detect his quarry approaching; then, like lightning, he plunges in his spear and brings up the wriggling salmon to his feet. But more often they have their nets set in the well-known runs, and drag the fish in larger quantities to the bank. As travellers journey by the railway along the Fraser River, they may see rough posts and rails arranged in exposed spots, where the salmon are hung out to be dried in the sun before being stored away for winter use. Far more fish are taken than the Indian requires for his own consumption, so the surplus is carried to the cannery to be paid for by the ever-welcome dollar.

The factory owner, however, takes the fish more to give help to the struggling native than to supply his own requirements, for he has methods of his own by which he can bring in all that he requires, and often a great deal more. The chief of those methods is the salmon-wheel. This is set near the bank in a part of the stream especially favoured by the fish. It looks like an ordinary water-wheel, such as may be seen working in the Rhone just below Geneva. The lower part of the wheel being immersed a foot or two in the water, it is turned the same way as the stream flows. The fish coming up-stream are confined by a bank of stones stretching out into the river, and so compelled to run into the trap laid for them. Two or three wire nets are so fixed, at equal distances apart, that they lie across the wheel at its circumference, and these are gathered inwards towards the axle in the shape of a half-funnel. The consequence is, as the salmon rush up into the revolving wheel they are scooped out of the water and tumbled down towards its centre, as the mouth of the net rises, when they fall into a slanting trough, down which they slide into a chamber on the shore. Here they lie flapping and gasping till a cart comes every few hours and conveys them to the factory. As I stood over one of these wheels, for only a few minutes, I saw several salmon rush into the fatal trap and helplessly wriggle off to their doom. The owner told me he was then taking from four to six tons of salmon every day in that spot.

Of course, all these collecting-places cannot be near the factory, and few can be approached by carts; hence there is another way of conveying

the fish, when caught, to their destination. At some of the wheels, when the fish are gathered, a number are tied together and attached to an empty barrel, which acts as a float; they are then thrown into the river and allowed to drift down-stream. At headquarters there were two little steam-launches, one of which, the moment a barrel is spied, dashes off and hauls in the bunches of salmon. When a sufficient number have been taken up they are conveyed to the factory, and the second launch starts off on the same errand. Since as much as twenty-five tons of salmon have been taken in a day from one of the wheels in the Columbia River, it may be imagined that the launches have their work cut out for them. In fact, the fish sometimes arrive in such abundance that the wheels have to be stopped, as the factory cannot dispose of them fast enough.

The cannery I visited was so built on the river-bank that part stood over the water, which enabled boats to pass the fish at once direct into the receiving-room. Here they are thrown down in a heap, several feet in depth, upon the floor, men in huge thigh-boots wading amongst them and passing them on for the canning process. All the hands employed except two were Chinamen. Much as these Celestials are despised in the States, it is difficult to understand how they could be dispensed with. They are handy at almost anything. As domestic servants they are invaluable, one man being able and willing to do all the house-work, including the washing. As navvies their work cannot be excelled. In this factory their deft fingers are most useful, especially where labour is so scarce.

The first man who receives the salmon examines each carefully, and a fish that shows any sign of imperfection is at once rejected and dropped into the river below. The selected fish he then takes in hand, chops off head, tail, and fins, and passes them on to a second man, whose duty it is to split, cleanse, and wash them. For this purpose he has flowing through a trough before him a stream of water, which carries away at once all the offal and ensures the fish being thoroughly clean. The next man stands in front of a set of revolving knives, the length of the can apart, so that the fish being placed under the knives are cut into exactly the right lengths. The cut-up fillets are then passed on to men who cram them into the one-pound tins. The most important process, that of weighing, is entrusted to the two white men. Each can in turn is placed in the scales, and scraps of salmon are added where necessary to make up the right weight. A travel-

ling band carries on the cans to a fresh lot of Chinamen, whose first duty is to solder them down; they are then immersed in trays of water, which are placed in large cylinders, to be heated up to boiling-point.

The process does not end here, for when fully heated the trays are brought out, and each can is pricked with a sharp-pointed hammer to let out the steam and heated air, and then soldered up, and a second time placed in the boiling cylinders. The canning being now complete, there only remains the enameilling and labelling of the tins. For convenience of export, boxes are made up, each holding four dozen cans. One may judge of the extent of this industry when it is stated that this factory sometimes has an output of a thousand boxes—that is, forty-eight thousand tins—a day.

An alarm has sometimes been raised that this enormous destruction of salmon will before long deplete the rivers. The alarm, however, is groundless, for the supply is apparently unlimited; the number of fish coming up year after year shows no sign of diminishing, but rather the reverse. The year I was there, it was said, would break the record. The Columbia is by no means the richest of these rivers. The Fraser is even better stocked, and in Alaska still greater harvests are gathered. Ten years ago, when the fisheries were said to be only in their infancy, the take of salmon from the Fraser was over eight million pounds' weight, and this was exclusive of what the Indians catch. When the fish are running up to spawn, they become so packed in the upper reaches that it is difficult to believe the reports that are in circulation; one is disposed to class them among Yankee exaggerations. Yet I believe there is some truth in the local saying that 'you can walk across the river on the fishes' backs,' if they would only bear you; for in their struggles up the shallows they thrust one another on to the banks, they lose their fins and tails in the scrimmage, and die in such numbers that the decaying fish cause a stench which is in places unpleasantly recognisable by the passengers on the Canadian Pacific Railway. For anglers the rivers are disappointing, as, it is said, the fish will not rise to the fly; they may, however, be caught by those who care for trolling. A gentleman told me that a friend of his had taken four thousand pounds' weight in six weeks by trailing a bait behind a boat on the Puget Sound. So the poor man who desires this cheap and tasty dish for his dinner may feel sure that the supply will not be exhausted for many a year to come.



LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND: A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER III.



ONE of the maids at Stalland House had a curious experience on the following morning. She was an old and trusted servant of the family, and it was her duty to attend to the drawing-room. On this occasion she was at work unusually early, having received strict commands from Lady Stalland to keep a careful lookout for the lost diamond, and to allow no other servant to assist her. For this reason she began the ordinary drudgery with a good spirit, and was toiling quietly but thoroughly, when she heard a footstep on the stairs. It was too early, she thought, for guests to be about, and the tread was a peculiarly cautious one, so she paused to listen. The footsteps came slowly nearer, but more cautiously than before; a moment later the door was pushed back, and the Bishop of Hexminster entered the room.

As she afterwards declared in the kitchen, 'it gave her quite a turn.' 'He came quiet-like, as if he didn't want any one to hear him,' she said, 'and he seemed all upset when he saw me in the room. And his face—why, it was as white as a sheet.'

'Had a bad night, perhaps,' suggested the cook. 'It was very warm.'

'He was thinking about his sermon, no doubt,' said the second footman. 'They say he preaches beautiful.'

This idea was considered a good one, and only Martin, who was leaning in grave silence against the dresser, failed to join in the chorus of agreement. The nurse, who had just come down, then contributed her share to the discussion.

'You should see how Miss Connie takes to him,' she began. 'He must be a good man, or children wouldn't fancy him so. Why, only last night she thought she heard him coming upstairs, and what did she do but slip out of her cot and run to the balusters. And what do you think she called him?'

'Something out of the way, I'll be bound,' said the cook. 'There never was such a child for queer ideas.'

'Well, she calls him "the wobber." She will have it that he's "the wobber." Such a name for a bishop, isn't it now?'

'Wobber? It must be "robber." I wonder what she means by that?' asked the cook.

The nurse had opened her lips to reply, when she became aware that Martin was looking at her with an expression which said, as plainly as possible, 'Silence!' No one else noticed it, but the meaning of the look was so clear that the

nurse, who was engaged to Martin, and therefore knew him very well, closed her mouth with an almost audible snap, and wondered.

'Talking about robbers,' said the housemaid, who had cleaned the drawing-room, 'there's my lady's diamond not found yet. Sir Edward will soon be in a nice excitement.'

The vagaries of Miss Connie were immediately forgotten, and the new subject warmly taken up. Eventually it was decided that the diamond must be lying all the time in some very safe and simple spot, where it would soon be found. This decision was built upon absolute ignorance of the ways of diamonds in general; but even Martin seemed to support it.

Meanwhile the Bishop was walking in the garden. The night had neither calmed his mind nor restored his courage, for he had failed to sleep. He had, instead, spent the dark hours in feverish reviews of what had occurred; in alternating agonies of fear, self-reproach, doubt, and self-abasement. His brow seemed to have several new furrows in it, his eyes had lost their benignity, and his cheeks were unnaturally pale.

After long consideration he had decided upon a craven but simple course—the one he had so carefully suggested to Martin. He had descended the stairs with great caution, intending to deposit the gem in some spot in the drawing-room where it might be found easily, yet not too easily. It had given him a serious shock to find the room occupied, and he had retreated from the vicinity with guilty haste. He was already suffering all the tremors of the repentant, faint-hearted criminal.

Now, in the garden, the fresh air cheered him a little. Surely this difficulty must soon be at an end. Of course it must. Why, the diamond could be placed almost anywhere, and almost any one would find it. That would be a much easier, much better way of setting things right than if he went to Stalland with his story—such a cock-and-bull story as it seemed, too. For a moment he thought of dropping it in the centre of the path, where the gardener should find it when he came; but reflection forbade. The man might tread it under foot; he might prove to be as ignorant of diamonds as a bishop, mistake it for a piece of glass, and throw it away. Besides, even if it were found there and restored, would not questions arise as to how it came to the garden at all? He walked on, pondering and weighing the possibilities.

Some time later he returned to the house, and, to his relief, found the drawing-room empty.

Standing on the hearthrug in his old place, he carefully surveyed the scene of operations. Here was his chance.

The rugs would not do, for of course they had been thoroughly shaken and searched, as well as the chairs and cushions. At last, however, he decided to place his unhappy find near the hearth, under the shadow of the great fender. During the day it would surely be found. Why, he might even find it himself. Then he shuddered at his own growing duplicity.

He took the jewel from its place and stooped down by the fender. His hand was extended—the thing was almost done—when——

‘Ah!’ said a voice. ‘That diamond, is it?’

The Bishop gasped and stood erect. Sir Edward Stalland had entered unnoticed.

‘I am afraid it’s of no use looking there,’ he added, shaking his head. ‘It is very kind of you to take such an interest, all the same. The thing’s stolen without a doubt.’

The Bishop recovered his presence of mind. He had unconsciously ‘palmed’ the diamond at the first alarm, and felt amazed to find himself so expert a thief. But Sir Edward had seen nothing.

‘Yes,’ he answered lamely, burning his boats behind him as he spoke. ‘Yes; it is undoubtedly stolen.’

There was no going back, no explaining, after that. Nor did he get another opportunity of being alone in the room, for Commander Digby came in just then, and did not go out again until breakfast was announced. Then every one seemed to be lingering about in the way, and the time passed uselessly until he was obliged to prepare for the walk to church.

The numbers who had gathered to hear the Bishop preach that morning were not entirely satisfied with the result. It was undoubtedly a good sermon, as a Bishop’s must always be; but there was something lacking. There was a curious hesitation, a want of force and vigour. The clear voice was not so clear as usual; the sentences did not come so freely; the speaker was absent and constrained in manner. Then it was whispered that his lordship was unwell, a suggestion to which his troubled face gave full authority, and the general surprise was changed into general sympathy.

The guests from the house walked back across the fields in groups; but the Bishop did not take part in the easy talk that prevailed. He walked alone, deep in his own unhappy musings, until some one joined him uninvited.

‘Wobber,’ said a friendly voice, ‘it’s only me.’

The Bishop looked down into the sunny face of Miss Connie. He was considerably startled by the form of address.

‘I think you’re getting tired of being a wobber,’ she went on, laughing. ‘Isn’t you?’

He sighed heavily. His knowledge of children was small, and he lived under the mistaken impression that their words were not intended for the serious notice of older folk. This child was evidently still thinking of their idle talk on the previous evening. He suddenly remembered it.

Following up the same train of thought, she continued, half in persuasion now:

‘When you’re tired you can give up the game. Will you give it up now?’

‘What game, my dear?’ inquired the Bishop in all innocence.

‘The wobber-game,’ was the simple answer. ‘You can give back the diamond you wobbled.’

That was a blow indeed. The Bishop almost gave a cry, and the child uttered a tiny scream. In his sudden agitation he had pressed her little hand with painful force.

With the blow came a revelation—a quick and complete understanding. She had seen him pick up the diamond; she was aware that he had it. Her form of address had been anything but meaningless, after all.

In a husky voice he asked for further light. Her clear, questioning gaze was positively painful.

‘Have you told any one else, my dear? Does anybody know?’

The answer was prompt and reassuring. ‘Nobody knows. I never tells till afterwards.’

The robber tried to comprehend the last enigmatical sentence, but it was too great a task for his bewildered mind. His accuser explained it herself.

‘Tisn’t fair to tell before the end of the game. Is it, wobber?’

The game? At first this seemed a singularly cold-blooded way of speaking, but clearer recollection made it plain. This little one, her life full of happy ‘make-believes,’ supposed that he was really playing at ‘robbers,’ and that his capture of the diamond was part of the game. He saw a gleam of hope. If the child’s lips could be sealed for a while things would surely right themselves. Afterwards no one would heed her talk, and the danger would be past.

‘You won’t tell,’ he said gently, and with a hypocritical smile. ‘You won’t tell anybody until—until to-morrow night. Promise!’

‘I won’t tell anybody until to-morrow night, wobber,’ was the ready reply. ‘Not until to-morrow night.’

‘Then,’ said the Bishop to himself, ‘I shall, I hope, be far enough away;’ and he actually congratulated himself upon his cleverness!

But the alarms of that day were by no means over. Miss Connie left his side before the house was reached in order to return to her nurse. Some of the party went indoors and others lingered on the lawn. The Bishop went directly to the drawing-room, only to find Commander Digby lazily lounging in the easiest chair. Baffled

and vexed, he then made his way to the farthest walks of the garden.

Careless of where he went, he came at last to a small wicket-gate and passed through, only dimly perceiving that he had entered the region of the kitchen-garden. After going some little distance, however, he was disturbed by the sound of voices in conversation.

They came from the other side of a thick privet-hedge. In another moment his footsteps must have been audible, but he paused there, intending to return. Then the first sentences that reached his ears fixed him to the spot as if spell-bound.

'It's the Bishop, Celia. He's got the diamond!'

The voice was that of Martin, the footman. In the silence which followed, the eavesdropper heard his own heart-beats.

'You may look surprised,' the voice went on in a subdued yet distinct tone, 'but it's true enough. I'm telling you, Celia, 'cause of little Miss Connie. She knows that he's got it, and so do I, and so do you now. But nobody else must know, so I want you to stop the little one from letting it out.'

Again a silence, during which the Bishop stood as if turned into marble. Then Martin continued:

'It was last night, when I took the lamp into the drawing-room. The Bishop was there, with Miss Connie on the rug in front of him. Just as I got in he noticed something on the floor—something bright and shiny. When Miss Connie wasn't looking, as he thought, he made a dart for that bright, shiny thing, and picked it up. You can guess what it was.'

'The diamond!' murmured the other voice in a tone of awe. It was the voice of a woman.

'Yes, the diamond. It was done in a flash, but I saw it plainly. No doubt Miss Connie saw it too, though she didn't pretend to; and that's why she calls him a robber, as you said this morning. You'll have to stop that, Celia. It would be awful if anybody else heard her and noticed.'

'But what did he do it for?' was the horrified question. 'He—a bishop, too!'

'What did he do it for?' answered Martin, so quietly that the unsuspected listener scarcely heard. 'Why, because he was mad—nothing else. He's the honestest man in the world; but when he picked up that diamond he was mad. He was mad at dinner, too, when he told them all that he hadn't seen it; but directly afterwards he saw my eye on him, and came straight to himself. "Martin," he says when they got up, "come to me in the library," 'cause he knew then that I had seen everything. And when we got to the library he was as sane as ever. "It's about Lady Stalland's diamond, Martin," he says, solemn as a judge. "You know that nobody

would have taken it deliberately, seeing what he was doing. Temptation is sometimes too strong for the best intentions; it comes like a sudden madness." And then he goes on: "The person who has taken this diamond," he says, "has repented, and will at once restore it to its owner in some way or other, and leave the scene for ever. And I am sure, Martin, that no one will say a word about it." It was awful, Celia, to hear the likes of him begging mercy of the likes of me, and a great lump got into my throat. "No, my lord," says I; "I'm sure of that." "Then that will do," he answers, thankful-like. "We quite understand each other, Martin—that will do." And then the interview was over.'

'What a dreadful thing!' said the voice of Celia, whom the Bishop rightly supposed to be the nurse. 'What a dreadful thing! A real bishop, too!'

Those who have known what it is to be condemned by the distorted evidence of their own words will sympathise with the Bishop. Martin's easy but earnest story was such a hideously true version of what had taken place that he could scarcely believe his ears. The difference, of course, lay in the point of view from which the story was told; but before he could arrange his scattered recollections the footman began once more:

'Of course it will be all as right as ninepence by to-morrow. The diamond will be found, and all that, and it won't matter much whatever Miss Connie says. But till it is found, you'll have to see that she says nothing about the Bishop to any one. Why, Celia, I'd rather have stolen the thing myself than let any one think that he did.'

There was a brief pause. 'I wouldn't, then,' said Miss Celia decidedly. 'We being engaged, I wouldn't.'

A short laugh from Martin was succeeded by a peculiar but unmistakable sound which caused the Bishop to blush even in the midst of his shame and dismay. Then the footman resumed the ordinary use of his lips.

'You don't know, Celia, how good he is, and how well he treated me when I was at the Palace. I only wish I was back there again. Mad he may be sometimes, but the Bible says that learning a lot is apt to make folks mad, and that's the way with him. Other times, I can tell you, he's an out-and-out gentleman. But perhaps we'd better get in now. Lunch will be almost ready.'

The last words broke the spell under which the listener had been rooted to his place behind the privet-hedge. While Martin and his companion were taking an affectionate leave of each other he retreated along the path with swift but silent steps, escaped through the wicket into the shrubberies, and sought a garden seat. There he

sank down in a state of mind which cannot be described.

'Good heavens!' he murmured after a few moments' deep mental agony. 'Good heavens! I wonder what will happen next.'

CHAPTER IV.



WHAT happened next was a simple consequence of what had gone before; but it was not the less alarming on that account. It took place during the same evening.

The whole day had been unspeakably miserable for the Bishop. Throughout the afternoon he had remained indoors, seeking an opportunity of carrying out his plan. He had lingered in the drawing-room in vain, for Commander Digby had lingered there too with strange and terrifying persistence, only going away at last to give place to others. He had wandered from the drawing-room to the library, from the library to the smoking-room, from the smoking-room to the garden, and back again, like an uneasy spirit. And still the wicked diamond nestled warmly in its place, mocking his efforts and rejoicing in his distress.

He could not throw it away. That would be robbery indeed, and would effectually prevent him from ever putting things right. Commander Digby and the Fates seemed to be all working against his first plan, for every room in the house had some one in it, while the darkest and emptiest corridors appeared, to his guilty conscience, armed with eyes. He surrendered that plan at last, and adopted another.

'I must take the awful thing home with me,' he decided feebly. 'If necessary, I can explain things to Martin and secure his silence. Then, when I get home, I can write to Stalland and return the stone. I could explain on paper more easily—much more easily; perhaps make a splendid jest of the whole affair. Yes, that will be the best way.'

So he descended his Avernus, treading with fatal ease lower slopes than he had ever thought to tread. But half-an-hour afterwards it seemed that his plotting and scheming must still be vain.

He was crossing the hall on one of his aimless pilgrimages, when a caller came to the door. Martin had disappeared during the afternoon, and it was the second footman who ushered the stranger in and took his name to Sir Edward in the library.

He was a man of plain, irreproachable appearance; but his rather expressionless face was not improved by a pair of eyes which were small and of a peculiarly hard blue. The Bishop glanced at him in passing, paused, and looked again. The new-comer smiled.

'Fitchett?' exclaimed the Bishop.

'Yes, my lord,' answered the caller.

There was a pause. 'This is a surprise,' said the Bishop. 'Are you in this district?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered Mr Fitchett in a lower tone. 'I am the head of the detective staff at Hazleton.'

Then the Bishop remembered. 'Ah,' he said unsteadily. 'Of course—I had forgotten. Sir Edward sent for you last night.'

'Yes, my lord,' said the officer meekly.

At that moment the second footman returned. 'Sir Edward,' he said, 'would see the gentleman at once.' The Bishop nodded and moved towards the door. Detective Inspector Fitchett, formerly of Hexminster, but now of Hazleton, followed the second footman.

The Bishop crossed the lawn and strolled down the drive with his thoughts in a tumult. He had received another shock, and this had shattered his last plan into ruin.

He did not possess any special gift of prophecy, but he saw as clearly as possible the events which must follow this latest development. The arrival of a police officer, of course, was no surprise, though he had somehow failed to consider it seriously; but that the Fates should have sent this particular man was the greatest calamity that could have occurred. For Mr Fitchett had been at Hexminster at the time of that unhappy little affair of Martin's. He was known to be a shrewd, astute officer, all eyes and ears, and he must have heard of it. Finding Martin at Stalland House, he would jump in an instant to one natural conclusion. Martin would be watched, arrested on suspicion, charged; he would be forced to tell all he knew in order to clear himself, and then—chaos! The Bishop shuddered.

He took the diamond from its hiding-place, and gazed at it with eyes of loathing and despair. Its value in thousands was nothing to him. How gladly would he have signed a cheque for the full amount, or for any amount, if by doing so he might have released himself from this painful and dangerous dilemma! How cheerfully would he have hurled the sparkling stone into the mazes of the shrubbery if that would have enabled him to sleep once more in peace! But he must keep it now, though its possession must inevitably bring him to confusion. What a conspiracy of circumstances it was!

Circumstances! He smiled bitterly as he remembered a remark of his own only yesterday at dinner to Mrs Digby. He had sternly set his foot upon the suggestion that circumstances should be considered in the case of another—yes, another criminal; and the irony of fate had decreed that he should have uttered those foolish words while Lady Stalland's diamond lay snugly in his pocket. How the gods must have laughed at that moment!

He walked on, passing the lodge gates and

taking the road that led away from the village of Stalling. The sun had gone down half-an-hour before, and the dusk of a summer evening was stealing on. Without him all was peaceful and tranquil; within there was a conflict of fear, self-censure, self-contempt. He went on for an hour; and then, warned by the approaching darkness, retraced his steps.

Instead of going directly up the drive to the house he turned into the shrubbery, intending to take that way as a more pleasant one. By this movement he came suddenly face to face with a person who was lingering among the laurels.

The Bishop was naturally startled by the unexpected appearance. Nor was he relieved to find Mr Fitchett before him.

'Ah,' he said, with assumed carelessness. 'Taking the air, I suppose?'

'Yes, my lord,' answered the detective, to whom the encounter was equally unwelcome. 'It is a beautiful night.'

The Bishop made an abrupt yet bold resolve. The germ of the idea had occurred to him during his walk, but it had not taken definite shape. Now it seemed to form itself, and here was the chance to execute it.

'Yes,' he assented. 'But, by the way, I was just thinking of you, Mr Fitchett. I should like to have a few words with you.'

'Certainly, my lord,' said the officer, with great readiness. 'I am entirely at your service.'

He turned immediately, and they went on together. After a few moments' consideration the Bishop began, in an easy and casual manner:

'What I wish to say is concerned with your business here. Perhaps you are aware, Mr Fitchett, that Sir Edward Stalland has in his service a man named Martin, who was formerly at the Palace. Probably you have seen him here?'

'I know that there is a man of that name in the house, my lord,' answered the inspector, with great caution. 'But I have not seen him. Sir Edward furnished me with a list of all the servants.'

'Of course,' said the Bishop, 'of course. But you will recognise this man when you see him. You will also remember, I dare say, that he was discharged from my service for being untrustworthy.'

The inspector could not understand such a bland confidence as this. His small blue eyes became harder and more intent, his face more expressionless than ever. What was it leading to?

'The reason why I mention this,' continued the Bishop, 'is simple enough. Finding Martin here, and knowing of that past incident, you may be disposed, and very naturally, to regard him with suspicion. Now, I happen to know that since he left my service this man has become a better man.

I believe him to be now thoroughly honest, thoroughly reliable.'

'Once a thief always a thief,' said the inspector, with conviction; but he said it mentally and not orally, while his manner to the Bishop was as humbly courteous as before.

'I have so great confidence in him,' his lordship resumed, 'that I feel positive of his innocence in this affair of the lost diamond. In fact, I shall have no hesitation whatever in asking him to return to his old place at the Palace.'

'Your lordship is very good,' Mr Fitchett murmured admiringly; but his head was bent and his hard eyes almost closed. With him a drooping of the eyelids signified concentration of thought.

'Not at all,' said the Bishop, 'not at all. But I do not think that a man's single fault should be allowed to pursue him and spoil his life if a word in season can prevent it. There, you have my opinion, Mr Fitchett, whatever it may be worth.'

'Thank you, my lord,' said the inspector very smoothly. 'It is extremely good of you to take this trouble. Ha! there is some one coming!'

They had paused, standing near a group of laurels at the border of the carriage-road. What Mr Fitchett had heard was a sound of footsteps on the crisp gravel, and in another moment a man passed by in the dusk. It was Martin.

They were silent until he had disappeared. Mr Fitchett, who had come into the shrubbery for the simple purpose of getting a quiet view of the footman whenever he should return, then concluded his remark:

'It is very good of you to take the trouble, my lord. I certainly shall not forget what you have said.'

'Thank you,' said the Bishop, well satisfied. 'I think it was my duty to say what I have said. Good-night.'

'Good-night, my lord,' answered the inspector; and the Bishop went quietly on to the house. He was well pleased with himself once more, and felt a little easier in his mind. Martin was surely safe now for a time at least, and before that time had expired he would have made everything right. By to-morrow evening he would be at home, writing that letter to Stalland.

The inspector did not follow the Bishop at once. He stood among the laurels for some time, recalling the conversation which had just ended, and trying to discover how it bore upon the case. In about five minutes he had fitted it nicely into the framework of his theories.

'Martin, my friend,' he said to himself, 'you are a little smarter than I thought. You have managed to get round our good Bishop, and got him to make things easy for you. It was a good idea—a very good one indeed!'

The inspector's conclusion was a very natural one. On his arrival at Stalland House, Sir Edward

had informed him thoroughly as to all the circumstances of the case. In addition to this he had perhaps unconsciously communicated to him his own suspicions, which lay in the direction of Martin. The detective perceived that they were not without reason; and when he had learnt that the footman was an old acquaintance with a clouded record, he adopted them without hesitation.

'This Martin,' he had asked carelessly, 'where did he come from last?'

'From the Countess of Jerbourg's,' answered Sir Edward. 'We did not inquire as to his previous place.'

Mr Fitchett had made a mental note there. Footmen are apt to boast of their previous situations; but Martin had evidently been silent with regard to his place at Hexminster. A palace is nothing to be ashamed of, either.

'He is not in the house now,' Sir Edward continued. 'I thought it well that he should not know of your arrival, and therefore sent him out.'

The inspector had approved of this movement as a good one, greatly to the baronet's satisfaction. There was, of course, the danger that Martin might find some opportunity of parting with the diamond before he returned, but it was not a serious danger. One would scarcely be likely to dispose of a ten-thousand-pound jewel on a Sunday evening in a quiet country place.

'It's hidden, I expect, somewhere about the

house,' thought Mr Fitchett, basing his decision upon a long experience. 'At any rate, I must get a look at this man at once. If he's the one I fancy, well, things are likely to get straight very soon.'

After clearing up every point which seemed in the slightest degree hazy, he had inquired the probable time of Martin's return, and had decided to get a quiet look at him from the shrubbery as he came in. Then had followed his meeting with the Bishop, and its interesting results.

It was Mr Fitchett's opinion that clergymen and ministers were among the most gullible of all earth's creatures, and he did not doubt that the Bishop was like the others of his cloth. He regarded him now with a great deal of contempt, a little admiration, a fair amount of pity.

'You are a good man, my lord,' he murmured, with a curious smile, as he made his way back to the house buildings—'you are a good man, but you are very soft. As for you, friend Martin, your game is up. You managed the Bishop right enough, but you never thought of Fitchett. Wait until the morning, and you'll see him!'

With these pleasant reflections the inspector amused himself until he had reached a small French window, which had been left open for his use. Five minutes later he was enjoying an excellent cigar in Sir Edward's study, and completing his plans for the morrow.

AN INVESTMENT FOR OLD AGE.



AMONG the hoard of worldly maxims on the lips of the old, none are more frequently uttered than exhortations to thrift and economy. 'It is the duty of all persons to economise their means,' says Dr Smiles. 'Thrift not only works for to-day, but also provides for the morrow.' Excellent maxims truly, but why do our sage advisers confine them to the use or abuse of money? Is there no other provision to be made for old age beyond caring for the needs of the body? The fable of the ant and grasshopper usually brought forward as an awful example to the pleasure-lover may be read in another way. To the ant, who has spent his summer in continuous labour, winter presents itself as a season merely of rest and enjoyment. He has a snug home and plenty to eat; that is the sum total of his possessions. No pleasant memories, no friendly intercourse, brighten his days, while his reception of the grasshopper reveals a most unamiable temper. The grasshopper truly is in sad plight enough, but he can say of his life that, if it were short, it was merry. Looking back and enjoying his happy recollections, he may forget the miseries of the present, and be

reconciled to his speedy departure from so unfriendly a clime.

What about the human ants? They do not spend more than is absolutely necessary; they carefully put by every penny saved for the future; and as men usually reap what they sow, they find themselves in old age with a snug competence. So far so good; but that is not enough. The money has been fairly and honestly earned; they have every right to fully enjoy it. But do they? In order to obtain this fortune they have worked hard all their days, have denied themselves relaxation, amusement, friendships. Now, in retiring from business, they have nothing within themselves to fall back upon. Such men are to be found everywhere. Too old to start any fresh interest, they wander about the streets and frequent the clubs aimlessly. They have always been too busy to take any part in public or religious work, and now it is too late to begin. They have never read anything beyond the daily paper, and never have had time to pursue a hobby. What shall such men do with their money? They can live in grand houses with costly living, but even so they can hardly be said to enjoy themselves. They have lost

the art of living, or, worse still, have never acquired it.

There is another sort of provision to be made for old age, and another kind of economy to be practised. The man who at the beginning of life resolves to earn more than he spends does well; he who puts by for the future is acting wisely; but this is only the foundation of wisdom. He must so spend his money that each year he may enlarge his experience and lay up a store of beautiful memories.

It is of no use to say, 'When I am rich I will travel; when I retire from business I will study this science;' because the desire will have perished before that happy day arrives.

How can we accumulate pleasant memories? Largely by travel; and the kind of travel will depend on the length of the purse and the amount of leisure. Happily, however, the enjoyment to be derived does not depend on either. One man will explore his own neighbourhood with more profit than another will derive from running over Europe. Thrift is exercised by managing best the available resources; by choosing just those expeditions that will store up pleasure for the future. Every year that does not add to our knowledge of beautiful scenery and famous buildings is a lost year. Beside these let us place the witnessing great ceremonies and becoming acquainted with notable people. Twenty years hence how we shall regret not having witnessed the Jubilee procession! Even now how great the satisfaction of being able to say, 'When I heard John Bright speak,' or 'When I shook hands with Lord Beaconsfield.'

Let us consider the domain of pleasure. Our model man never wastes his money on amusement; he has never heard Patti sing nor enjoyed a Wagner opera. He reads his Shakespeare at home, and so has never seen Irving impersonate the Jew, or Robertson play Hamlet. But we intend to con our Shakespeare in old age, with its pages illumined by remembrances of great actors and actresses. If deafness comes upon us, we shall still be able to recall the music of the past.

These are delights for the eye and ear; but there are others. The world of books requires an article to itself. Here too, as in the world of pleasure, let us have a care that we are laying up stores for the future; let not our reading or amusement be for the moment only. The choice is so varied, the risk of misuse so great, that we must ask ourselves constantly, 'Will this make for pleasure in old age? Is it a thrifty investment of time?' One great charm of books is that, in late life, when travel is impossible and amusements pall, they may still be enjoyed and loved.

This leads to another point. The busy man intent on saving money has no time for friendship; for be it observed that to keep friends is no easy matter; we may make friends quickly

enough, but to retain them requires time, self-denial—nay, even money. But there is no better investment to be made; nothing among an old man's possessions can be more valuable than the friends of his youth. Dr Johnson said that the man was a fool who did not cultivate his friends. It is this cultivation that is the point. It is a troublesome thing, not to be undertaken by the busy man, for above all things it requires leisure. But it is worth doing nevertheless.

The day will come when we shall hope to leave business, to enjoy an easy leisure; to retire with some strength of mind and body. How are we to fill the time? Not only with books and friends and pleasant memories. Is there no work begun in earlier life that can still be carried on? Hobbies there are of all kinds, and singular is the man who does not own one; but beyond these is there nothing? Have we taken some share in the business of our town? Have we interested ourselves in some philanthropic or religious work? Our part, perhaps, has been small, but still our interest has been real. Now, in later life, with abundant leisure and larger experience, we can take a larger share. The wise schoolmaster carefully lays the foundations of sciences that cannot be mastered in school life, knowing that, once the preliminary difficulties are conquered, the subject can be taken up later and pursued with advantage. So let it be with us; in active life start the beginnings of business that may interest and employ later years, realising that it is easier to carry on work than to begin it afresh.

Then as each year ends, when we have made up the balance-sheet of gains and losses, and ascertained our monetary position, let us also sum up the moral and intellectual gains of the past twelve months. He only is prepared rightly for old age who takes account of these things as well as of his bank-book.

GREETING.

MANY years have sped

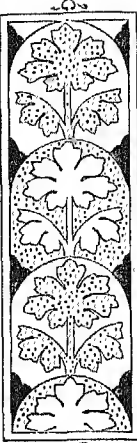
Since first I saw your orange covers;
And with them youth and strength have fled,
Old friends are gone, and youthful lovers.

But, even as in days gone by
You came to bless my scanty leisure,
Still in your pages I desecry
A welling fount of quiet pleasure.

Go on, old Friend; and as of yore
You bid us company with sages,
Walk with them still, as heretofore,
And may no evil mar your pages.

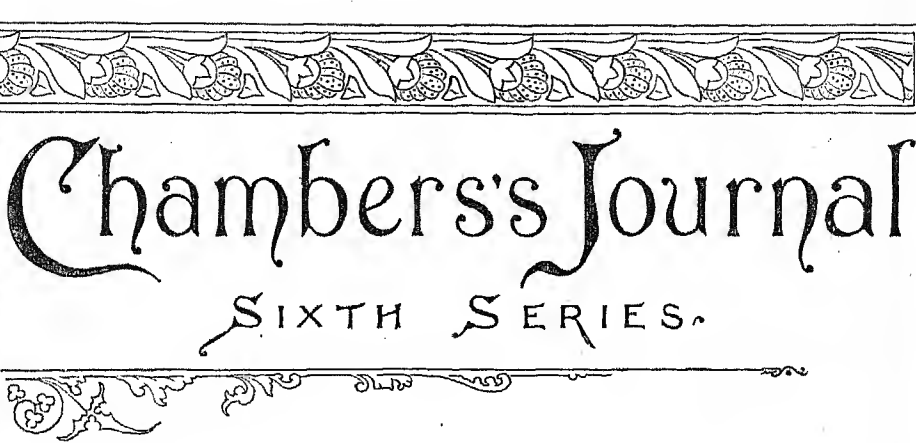
And when Death's deep forgetfulness
Has closed for me all earthly pleasure,
May *Chambers* still remain to bless—
Those who come after—in full measure.

M. L. S.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



VIRGINIA: ITS RISE AND FALL.

A SPORTING COLONY IN WALTER RALEIGH'S OLD DOMAINS.

By GERALDINE VANE.

VIRGINIA has always, since its earliest days of colonisation, been regarded as the home of the Englishman. For some occult reason, nine out of every ten Englishmen on landing in the 'new country' will, sooner or later, drift to the Anglified portion of this state. Many retain the idea that Virginia is still a portion of England, that the inhabitants are still English, and that everything partakes largely of the habits and customs of the old country—that, in fact, we will be reminded of home at every turn. If their hopes have deceived them, they have only themselves and Thackeray's novels to blame; the fault is probably due to their ignorance of geography. They had not, perhaps, realised its vast area, the old state being larger than Scotland, and the new state nearly as large. The two states have a glorious climate and a glorious country, fertile in most districts, rewarding labour by producing everything that grows; it is rich in minerals, wonderfully watered, beautiful and picturesque to a degree.

The two states, East and West Virginia, separated from each other during the War of Secession, had never very much in common. The new state, West Virginia, owing to its high, mountainous nature, being less suited to the employment of the negro than its eastern sister, was populated by a race of simple mountaineers, who, in bygone days, resented any intrusion of their consins the slave-owners, living contentedly in their beautiful wilds, devoting their time to the raising of cattle on the excellent pastures which the limestone slopes of their mountains afforded them, and producing from the fertile soil every necessary their simple lives required.

I penetrated these mountains, with a couple of friends, in search of sport, undeterred by the wild

tales recounted of the ferocious and blood-thirsty race living on their heights. So mountainous and rugged is the huge tract of country known as West Virginia that development, as understood in these days, has barely touched it. One railway runs through the centre of the state; another circles its western borders. The vast space between, separated from Old Virginia on the east by the main chain of the Alleghanies, is a mighty wilderness, scantily squatted on, rather than settled, by a pastoral race, descendants, for the most part, of those Irish Presbyterians whom our despotic rulers drove some 120 or 130 years ago from the country, of which they were the cream and backbone, to form in turn the cream and backbone of Washington's army in 1776. These wilds are a very paradise for sportsmen who can afford the time to penetrate the forests, which teem with deer, bear, and the panther, besides wild turkeys and ruffed grouse, which latter, being in no wise shy, drummed around us as we fished. We fished for four days; but for the first time in my life I tired of this sport. The trout never left off rising. After a few hours' fishing such an enormous number of silvery, plump, splendid little fellows lay around us that we were at last obliged to throw them back into the river alive, having no means of shipping them home, being ninety-five miles from the nearest rail.

In all my travels I have never come across prettier water, prettier fish, or more enchanting scenery. We fished a stream of considerable size, a precise reproduction of a Scottish trout-stream, being just too wide in most places to cover without wading. Wooded hills rustling in the freshness of spring rose gently from either bank, leaving strips of green meadow between, where cows and sheep cropped the early grass. A considerable amount of timber straggled down to the banks,

leaving between them a margin of dry rocks or silvery sand, which rendered walking easy and wading not often necessary.

The eastern state of Virginia, scented with the flavour and romance Thackeray's novels have attached to it, differs in every way from its late co-estate. The soil is less fertile than in Western Virginia, having been exhausted by repeated crops of tobacco; the ruined residents, victims of the Civil War, being unable to afford to manure it as was requisite, yet yearly taking all they could get from its soil. The attraction this state has held out to English colonists dates back to a far earlier period than that treated of by Thackeray. Sir Walter Raleigh's expedition discovered Virginia's shores, taking possession in 1584.

The first colony, settled there under the charter of a London company in 1607, consisted of a few gentlemen of fortune—people having no occupation and no family. In their service twelve labourers and a few mechanics emigrated. They settled in Jamestown, on the James River, buying from the Indians, who were then friendly disposed towards them, such land and provisions as they required. But this little colony received no encouragement during its early settlement. Malaria and all the diseases accompanying a damp climate swept off half of the settlers, and the miserable remnant had just decided to abandon the colony when Lord Delaware arrived, bringing with him a large quantity of supplies and more emigrants. One of these married an Indian squaw, Pocahontas, daughter of the chief of one of the principal tribes, thereby securing their friendship.

Ten years later ninety young women were sent out from England, being sold to the planters respectively for 100 lb. of tobacco. A hundred convicts were also shipped out to supply labour, and a Dutch trader imported twenty negroes, being the first batch imported of the slaves who eventually became so indissolubly connected with the state. The little colony increased in numbers, reaching in 1622 to 4000; and fifty years later, in spite of numerous wars and massacres, this number swelled to 40,000—6000 of these being English convicts and 2000 black slaves. The now prosperous little colony boasted at the same time of twenty churches. Their staple industry was the cultivation of the tobacco-plant, which was produced in such enormous quantities that they were obliged at length to burn half the crop on account of the tremendous fall in price this overplus occasioned.

The practice of smoking this plant dates back to unknown antiquity amongst the American Indians. Columbus found the habit prevalent in the West Indies, where the natives smoked rolls of it wrapped in a maize-leaf.

When first introduced into Europe it was cultivated in Spain as an ornamental plant—the Spaniards eventually being the pioneer European nation in its cultivation to any large extent,

commencing about 1530 to grow it in the island of San Domingo; the Portuguese followed their example some forty years later; and these two nations controlled the entire trade for many years.

Fortunes were speedily realised in tobacco, and Virginia as a planting country came to be looked upon by us as Ceylon and India have been in recent years—as a colony offering advantageous openings to our sons, ne'er-do-wells or otherwise.

The principal seat of the tobacco trade carried on between Virginia and the home country was situated in Glasgow, becoming one of the most important carried on within the walls of the 'Cross,' or, as it is called nowadays, the 'Exchange.' Glasgow merchants realised enormous profits by lending to the planters small sums to enable them to work their crops, receiving in consideration the right to buy these crops at a fixed price, independent of the fluctuations of the home-market. In this way tobacco proved a most paying concern, building up fortunes the evidence of which is still to be seen in the ruins of colossal mansions on the James River; Virginia proving to our island a veritable El Dorado for about a hundred and sixty years, until she broke away from the mother-country. At the termination of the war which established her independence she kindly consented to continue sending us, as hitherto, her staple trade. The trade prospered, intermingling with the trade in humans (which we bequeathed to our errant subjects), until years later, when the great Civil War ended in the freedom of the slave and the ruin of the planter. None survived the general devastation; and although the Virginians made a prolonged and brave stand, they saw the Yanks (whose very name is loathed and hated to this day throughout Virginia) demolishing, with the help of their paid German and Irish friends, their beloved homesteads, first carefully appropriating from among the household treasures any convertible articles of value, and then shipping the pianos and silver, &c., off to New York, where they found a ready market for their 'booty.'

This generation who fought the Yanks, the fine old typical race of 'F.F.V.s' (first families of Virginia), the American aristocracy, now fast disappearing, have still no use for those 'mean Yanks.' They tell you still, 'You had best make a bonfire of the whole crowd.' Years have not effaced the bitterness and rancour they feel towards them—bitterness which might perhaps have been lessened had prosperity returned to their homes; but, robbed of their slaves, and having no means to obtain the necessary labour in order to cultivate their plantations, they appear to have lost all energy, and instead of rousing up and entering into new enterprise, they sank down in the midst of their ruined estates, surrounded by their ex-slaves, many of whom still clung to

them, looking to them for support, leading an aimless, hand-to-mouth sort of existence, and lamenting their bygone glory and prosperity.

The sons of these ruined veterans are, as they grow up, fast realising that fortunes will not seek them out. Gradually they are abandoning their unfruitful estates and seeking positions in the cities, many who bear time-honoured names of 'F.F.V.s' now serving behind the counter in 'stores' or on the railways.

Thus, in the freeing of the slaves, the great tobacco industry of Virginia, although carried on now to a certain extent, received a blow from which it has never recovered, the plant losing in quality as the ground grew poorer. The whole aspect of the country has changed; the negro is gradually beginning to assert his independence, attempting to prove his equality with the white man. Generations must, however, rise and fall ere he can accomplish this object. Time must be allowed him to cultivate his woolly brains up to the required standard of perfection necessary to compete with the brain and resource of the white man, who has passed through such countless ages of training.

When all the old slave-owners were ruined and the masters could not feed the freed slaves, they were driven forth, the majority going unwillingly, and many among them bringing their earnings to help their old masters' families. Even now the children of those ex-slaves still cling to the children of their fathers' masters.

A hard-riding, hard-drinking colony are the English for the most part now, and a considerable fund of romance might be woven out of the numerous eccentricities indulged in by some of the many curious and amusing characters who keep their surrounding neighbourhood lively.

Many of the young fellows eventually take to 'keeping a store,' often speedily amassing a fortune out of what usually proves to be a very paying concern. Others have taken to dairy-farming and wine-growing, planting vineyards on the latest improved French methods; but this latter industry has proved in most cases but a sickly trade. John Bull is to be found in every district of Virginia; but Charlottesville and its neighbourhood is most densely populated by Englishmen. This town boasts of the oldest 'varsity,' and is the seat of the principal learning and culture of the state.

Perhaps it is due to the vagaries of the many curious specimens, representatives of our country, that we are not, or indeed, I might say, never have been, favourites with our Virginian consuls. It is curious to note in the pages of history that this, the oldest of the thirteen original states, notwithstanding the fact that its people are more essentially English by descent, having less mongrel blood in their veins than the inhabitants of any other American state, has nevertheless been ever foremost on all possible occasions to rise against

the old country. From her emanated the idea of independence; she urged the other states to join with her in a declaration to that effect; and in recent years the animosity again cropped out, their legislature being the loudest in their clamour against us over the Venezuelan question.

This old domain proudly claims among her sons most of the finest men America can boast of—men who have carved their names indelibly in the pages of its history. George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were Virginians; and when will General Lee be forgotten—that fine old courier and veteran, who practically controlled the whole operations of the Civil War, in his hopeless stand against such overwhelming numbers sent from the North to crush him? Nor must Stonewall Jackson's name be omitted. Four out of the first five presidents were Virginians. Indeed, until within recent years she has ever been foremost in the politics and legislature of the States, boasting of the aristocracy of the country, the 'F.F.V.s' (now fast decaying) holding their heads as high as any of our baronial families in the old country.

The romance of bygone days of prosperity clings about the old state, placing it at once apart from the others, which are essentially 'new' in every detail. It teems with places of interest. For beautiful scenery the Shenandoah Valley is unrivalled. It is described by General Spottiswood as 'God's land,' and dotted over it are still to be seen the remains of picturesque old piles, relics of former prosperity.

The sulphur springs situated on the slopes of the western mountains are a great feature in the social life of the Virginian, and, indeed, of the American. Large parties from the various towns take shelter in the cool shades of the mountains during the hot summer months, living around the 'springs' in the tiny chalets (not unlike the Swiss chalets) dotted about. Each party often consists of thirty or forty, who keep to their own little clique entirely, and spend their days in picnicking and their evenings in dancing, having, as they term it, a 'real good time.'

Another beautiful spot is the neighbourhood of that curious phenomenon the Natural Bridge. A tiny rivulet now runs beneath this huge excavation, which will always be a mystery. Perhaps the friction of countless ages has gradually hollowed out its passage, sinking deeper, and crumbling away the earth obstructing its way, leaving overhead the huge mass of rocky soil, which forms a bridge, from which looking over, down on the stream below, human beings at its edge appear in size like various insects, so small are they.

In spite of its numerous vicissitudes, Virginia will one day regain its old prestige and figure once more among the foremost of the states. The beauty of its scenery and the healthy nature of its

climate is attracting many wealthy Northerners to come and settle among its glades, bringing with them their inseparable spirit of push and advance. As years go by they will not rest con-

tent until they see the state in which they have fixed their home incomparable, and until they and their children in their turn form the aristocracy—the new aristocracy—of Virginia.

THE GOLDEN LILY.

CHAPTER VII.—A COUNTRY VISIT.



WHAT in the world is the matter, Miss Lily? Hulme asked, mechanically dropping into the old form of address. 'Is there anything I can do for you?'

This was when Lily Warner came out of the shadow of the gateway that night and timidly accosted him at the Marble Arch. Hulme was dumfounded by her appearance.

'Oh yes!' she answered, moving closer to him, and looking very white and piteous. 'Oh, Mr Hulme, I have left my father—I never can live with him again—and I don't know where to go, and I have no money!'

'Good heavens!' exclaimed the young man. For a moment he reflected; then, glancing at the girl's white face and her delicate frame shrinking with the cold, he hailed a hansom-cab. His decision was taken immediately.

She got into the cab with him without hesitation or question. Hulme himself was so preoccupied with the extraordinary situation that it did not occur to him how implicitly she trusted in him. In fact, the cab had gone some distance before the circumstance was presented to his mind. She inquired gently:

'Where are you taking me to, Mr Hulme?'

'Oh,' he answered quickly, 'you have not forgotten Jim Solus, I suppose?'

'Poor Jim!' said the girl. It was 'Poor Jim!' with all of them who had known him. 'No, Mr Hulme. How could I forget Jim?'

'I live with Jim's brother—his twin brother—just such another good-hearted man as Jim himself. I am taking you to his house, Miss Lily. I know he will be glad to receive you, and take care of you, if only for Jim's sake; but he will do it for your own sake, too, Miss Lily. Mr Gaverick is an old bachelor; but Betty, the housekeeper, will do everything for you.'

'And you live with Mr Gaverick?'

'Yes; I am employed by him, and he wished me to live in his house.'

The girl was silent after this, and answered only by monosyllables to one or two remarks made by Hulme. He suddenly remembered himself, and felt the colour in his face, which of course the girl could not see.

'I will get a room in the neighbourhood for myself, Miss Lily—there will be no trouble at all about that; and you shall have mine in Mr

Gaverick's house. We are there now,' he added as the cab drew up.

Hulme handed her from the cab, and opened the door with a latchkey. There was light in the dining-room, and he knew Mr Gaverick was sitting there. Without a moment's hesitation he opened the door and led Lily Warner, who shrank back a little, into the room.

The old gentleman laid down his pipe and stood up, with questioning surprise in his face.

'This is Miss Lily, Mr Gaverick,' said Hulme at once, leading the girl forward. 'She has been compelled to leave her father, and I have found her by accident. I will leave her with you to tell her story. I—I know you will protect her.'

The young man left the room and closed the door. He went upstairs to pack a bag and remove all masculine traces from his room.

Mr Gaverick looked at the girl at first in speechless surprise. He knew her history very well, and what she had done, at Jim's request, for young Hulme in his illness. The pleading timidity of her eyes and the gentle beauty of her pale face melted his surprise into tenderness and pity, and he took her small, cold hands in his own, and placed her in a comfortable chair before the fire. The kindness of a stranger—and he was so like old Jim!—overwhelmed the homeless girl, and she burst into tears.

'Now, now!' said Mr Gaverick hastily. 'Now, now, my dear little lassie, you mustn't do that. Dicky was right to bring you here; the lad's heart is in the right place, and his head is right too. Now, now! You must eat and drink something at once. Not a word till you have done so. Here, Betty'—the old woman had answered the bell—'here is a young lady, tired and cold. Have you anything nice and warm to give her? I'll warrant you have—there isn't your equal in London at a pinch. Now make haste, Betty; and make some tea, too.'

Betty disappeared, and was back in a few minutes laying a snowy tablecloth. Meantime Mr Gaverick poured out a glass of wine and made Lily drink it. It was not long before a warm and tempting repast was upon the table. In truth, the girl was very hungry, having eaten nothing since breakfast, and the face of Mr Gaverick shone with satisfaction as he watched how she enjoyed the meal.

When the cloth was removed and Betty left

the tea on a corner of the table, Lily Warner was composed enough to relate unreservedly to Mr Gaverick her reasons for leaving the protection of her father. He heard her in silence to the end.

'Poor child, poor child!' he then said. 'Surely no one could blame you. You did what was right. But, good heavens, my dear little lassie! what would you have done if you had not met Dicky Hulme?'

She hung her head. That was a hard question to answer. She might have sunk on some doorstep and died of the cold.

Just then Hulme reappeared, with his overcoat on and his hat in his hand.

'I am going round to Mrs Sinclair,' he said, colouring. 'I know she has a bedroom to let. Betty has put mine in order for Miss Lily, and lit a fire.'

Lily Warner looked embarrassed and distressed, but there was nothing she could say. It took Mr Gaverick a full minute to get over his first feeling of amazement and realise the meaning of Hulme's proceeding.

'Ah!' he exclaimed. 'You are quite right, Dicky. You are quite right, my boy. But you must come back to breakfast in the morning.'

He promised to do this, and shyly offering his hand to the girl, he bade her good-night. Her response was hardly audible, and she raised her eyes only a little way towards his face. A blush at the same time told of some unspoken emotion.

Hulme lay awake most of that night thinking of her, and wondering what was the key to her demeanour towards him since that evening in Coolgardie. He was grateful that she appealed to him in her distress and accompanied him with such child-like confidence. But it might have been from a sense that he owed her much. How was he to know? At all events, let his doubts and anxieties be what they might, he was glad she had separated herself from her father and Mark Revel.

Mr Gaverick, too, gave a good deal of thought to Lily Warner that night. He admired and approved the propriety of Dicky Hulme leaving the house. This led the old gentleman to consider the situation further. He was certain in his own mind, from all that had fallen from Hulme concerning this Miss Lily, that the young man was in love with her. That was all right. Dicky could read and write, and was well educated; and no girl could ever be ashamed of him on account of his illiteracy. But the little lassie, he argued, should get a fair chance for herself. If she stayed in this house, with Dicky Hulme at her side every morning and evening, it would, according to Mr Gaverick's quaint notion of the case, be placing her at a disadvantage. There was nothing the old gentleman would like better than to see these two young people married and happy. But he thought the girl ought not to be

run into a corner. Moreover, his was a dreary old house, with no society but that of Betty. How would the poor lassie get through the long days alone?

The conclusion of all this cogitation was, that he would send Lily Warner down to his sister's farm-house in Buckinghamshire. There would be ducks, and geese, and fowls, and cows, and sheep, and a dozen other healthy interests to occupy her there. His sister Molly and her husband were a genial couple, who would be delighted to have so pretty an object to pet and make much of. They had no child of their own. They had had a daughter once, of Lily's age, who died of consumption. They should have the girl, Mr Gaverick decided, but upon the clear and express understanding that they should be willing to surrender possession whenever required. From his knowledge of them, Mr Gaverick was convinced of the necessity of this stipulation.

What Lily Warner's thoughts were that night will never be known. But she looked so bright and charming next morning that Mr Gaverick was more than ever impressed with the importance of binding his sister Molly and her husband by a very tight compact.

Lily Warner, accordingly, was taken by Mr Gaverick to Buckinghamshire in the course of a few days. Since then Dicky Hulme had been vainly hoping she would some day send him a line or two for himself—about the weather, or the country, or anything—just to show that he had some special place in her thoughts. But she sent him no line. He was far from murmuring against her silence, because he doubted whether he had any right to what he was wishing for. She wrote regularly to Mr Gaverick, and sent Hulme her kind remembrance; that was all. Mr Gaverick now declared that he, Dicky Hulme, ought to have gone to see her, and he went on the Saturday afternoon, with a good deal of anxiety as to the manner in which Lily would receive him.

Farmer Broughton, sister Molly's husband, met them at the station with his dogcart, and drove them home. Mr Gaverick hailed his sister in a very kind voice, asking her a dozen questions in a breath, none of which she had an opportunity of answering. Tea-things were laid in the cosy parlour, and rubbing his hands as he glanced around, Gaverick demanded:

'Where is the little lassie? I say, Broughton and Molly, where is she?'

'Oh, she's coming, she's coming,' was his sister's reply; 'she is only putting on an extra ribbon in honour of the visitors.'

'Ha! the little witch,' cried Mr Gaverick, laughing heartily; 'she means to break our hearts. Here she comes; here she is!'

Lily entered the room, bright and blushing with a beauty that almost took Hulme's breath away. She went up to Mr Gaverick, put her

soft hands round his neck, and kissed him. The ecstasy of the old man on receiving this unexpected salute was delightful to behold, and would be impossible to describe. Turning from him after a few seconds, she approached Dicky Hulme with a still higher colour in her face, and gave him her hand.

'I am glad to see you,' was all she said; but the words were so softly spoken that no one heard them but Hulme.

And at tea—which was a rather formal business at the farm-house, with incidents of abundant bread-and-butter, cold ham and fowl, jams, and other things—she sat next to him, and after a little while told him of her happy life in the country, of the primroses and violets that lined the hedgerows, of the nest-building of the birds, of the young lambs and young rabbits, and the corn springing up in the sunshine.

'What's all that talk about?' inquired Mr Gaverick, who had been keeping them under furtive observation from the corner of his eye.

'I was telling Mr Hulme about all the changes one sees in the country in the spring,' she answered.

'Ah! Better take him out after tea and show him some of them. It's precious little we know about such things in the City. And there are some things he doesn't know—that he ought to know,' Mr Gaverick added.

The significance of the observation was not lost upon Hulme. The girl was innocent of the meaning, but she glanced shyly at the young man.

'I hope you will, Miss Lily,' he said; 'I should like a ramble through the fields so much.'

'Very well,' she answered at once. 'I will get my hat and jacket.'

Dicky Hulme's heart had never felt so buoyant as it did whilst she walked by his side through the pleasant fields. The primroses, and violets, and lambs, and rabbits were unnoticed. They talked of the 'Golden Lily' and Jim Gaverick. The girl knew it was her own name the dear old miner had given to his find. On the downfall of her father and Revel they were altogether silent.

'I think I never heard any news in my life,' she said, 'that made me so happy as the news that Jim was alive and well.'

'Have you heard that he is coming home?'

'No!'

'He is. He will be in England in six weeks.'

'Oh, how I will kiss his dear old sunburnt face! Poor old Jim! It must have been a disappointment to him, when he returned to Coolgardie, to find that you had gone back to England.'

'I believe so, Miss Lily.'

'Why do you call me "Miss Lily"?''

'The habit clings to me. What should I call you? "Miss Warner" doesn't come so readily to my tongue.'

'Call me—Lily, simply,' she said after a pause.

'Lily. Then, Lily, I am no longer to be "Mr Hulme," please.'

She laughed and blushed.

'Very well,' she replied. 'And now, why did you leave Coolgardie?'

'In the first place, I was too weak after my illness to do anything. In the next place, I believed Jim Solus was dead. Lastly'—He hesitated, and the girl looked at him with expectant eyes. 'Well,' he said, lowering his voice, 'for some reason I never could fathom, you came to see me no more. Then you went away to England without a good-bye. It was very foolish of me, no doubt; but I felt it keenly, and was sick until I got away from Coolgardie.'

She sat down on the step of a stile, and after looking vacantly for a minute across a field of young corn, burst into tears. For some time her tears flowed freely and she made no attempt to speak. Hulme stood gazing upon her in perplexity and distress.

'Lily,' he asked, 'have I said anything to offend you?'

'No, no, no! Sit—sit down beside me, and I will tell you.'

She made room for him on the narrow seat, and he was very close to her when he sat down.

'This was the reason,' she said, lowering her face. 'You showed me those letters from my father and Mr Revel. You did not know who I was. But I knew. How could I come near you again after that? I was my father's daughter, Dicky. I was ashamed to meet you again. You would learn who I was, and shun me and despise and hate me. That was why I did not see you again.'

'Oh Lily, Lily! What had your innocent soul to do with the misdeeds of others? If I had only known! And I thought, when you went away and they said you were to marry Revel, that I could tear you out of my breast. But when I saw you again in London, sitting with him in a theatre, in spite of myself my heart leaped out to you with a cry. I could not get you out of my life. And, fearing the cause of your change, I have been afraid to speak to you since you came to Mr Gaverick's.'

'You are not—afraid—now?' she whispered.

'Oh Lily!'

He was not afraid now; not afraid to kiss the sweetness of her lips, her cheek, her forehead, her hair, her hands—to strain her to his heart, until she uttered a short 'Oh!' of delicious distress.

Six weeks from that day these two young people were married, Jim Gaverick looking most uncomfortable in a black frock-coat, impressively giving the bride away. Jim's functions were not finished in the church. After the breakfast at his brother's house, the division of the 'Golden Lily' had to take place, according to the terms of the original

partnership, from which no power on earth could make Jim depart by a hair's-breadth. Twenty-five thousand pounds and thirty-five thousand shares were transferred to Dicky Hulme, who had already settled upon Lily all he had—his mother's little fortune. Nor was Jim likely to forget his promise to Miss Lily, as he still called her.

'My word, Michael!' he said to his brother in

his most solemn manner, 'you will never know what a stunning girl Miss Lily is! I know—and Dicky knows. But you—you can't imagine it, Michael!'

Mr Warner and Mr Revel, it may be mentioned, were not at the wedding, being detained abroad by circumstances beyond their control.

THE END.

ARMY RECRUITING ABROAD.



T the present time, when the recruiting of the army is attracting public attention, it will not be inappropriate to describe the systems by which foreign armies are maintained, more especially as the adoption of conscription has been boldly advocated of late.

It is not necessary to trace the history of conscription, for it is at once apparent that it arose in primitive communities when every man naturally armed himself to repel the attacks of invaders or to avenge injuries inflicted upon his country. The modern principle of conscription was first adopted in France in 1798, and until 1872 it was resorted to from time to time as necessity arose. After the disastrous defeat at the hands of the Germans, personal military service was finally adopted as the permanent means of providing an adequate fighting force. Every Frenchman, unless physically unfit, is bound to enter the army. There are, however, certain youths who are exempt from this law. All men under five feet two inches in height, and others incapacitated by deformity or permanent disease, are exempt on the grounds of physical unfitness. Extreme ugliness, short sight, stammering, slight lameness, and an excess or the reverse of the right number of toes or fingers, are included under this heading. The eldest brother of a family of orphans, the only son of a widow, of a disabled father, or of a father over seventy, are required to serve for one year only. In the case of two brothers, if the younger is efficient, he enters the army and thus exempts his elder brother; or if one of two brothers is serving when his younger brother attains his twentieth year, or has served previously, the younger is exempt. Convicted felons, as in England, are not allowed to enter the army.

Every year about three hundred thousand Frenchmen reach the age of twenty. After the physically unfit, and those who are exempt under any of the above clauses, have been weeded out, the actual number of men required to maintain the standard strength of the army is chosen by ballot. They spend three years in the active army, and are then dismissed from permanent service and return to civil life. But for the following ten years they are numbered among the reserve

of the active army. They are then drafted into the territorial army for six years; at the conclusion of which they pass into the territorial reserve for another six years. Not until the age of forty-five does a Frenchman become free from all obligation to military service; for thirteen years he is liable to be called upon to serve either at home or abroad, and for the following twelve years to defend his country against invaders. No exemption can be purchased; unless a conscript is exempt either on the ground of physique or for family reasons, he is bound to serve his twenty-five years. Until 1890 there was a class of conscripts known as 'one-year volunteers.' These were men of good education, who were allowed to purchase their discharge after one year's service. The extent to which conscription has militarised France may be gathered from the fact that every fourth male is serving or has served in the army.

Compulsory service has been in force in Prussia since 1817, and in 1871 it was extended to the whole of the empire. Every German, with exceptions similar to those in France, must serve twelve years in the army or navy. The term of service includes two years with the colours in the standing army (three years in the cavalry and artillery), four years in the reserve of the standing army, two years in the Landwehr, and four in the Landsturm. On leaving the active army and passing into the reserves, the men may be refused permission to emigrate during their first year of civil life. After the standing army has been recruited to its full strength each year, the surplus conscripts are enrolled in the Ersatztruppen, and for twelve years undergo annual training. Until the age of forty-two all Germans, whether they have served in the active army or only in the Ersatztruppen, are liable to be called upon to serve in the Landsturm. In the infantry, men of good education are allowed, under certain conditions, to purchase their discharge after one year's service.

Universal service was introduced into Austria-Hungary in 1868. There are no exemptions, and those who are physically unfit are obliged to purchase their freedom by payment of a fine according to their means. About seven hundred and fifty thousand men are examined yearly, and of

these one hundred and fifty thousand are selected. Service is for three years with the colours, seven in the reserve of the active army, two years in the Landwehr, and ten in the Landsturm. The second class of conscripts are drafted into the Ersatz reserve for twelve years. Those who escape these terms with the first and second lines of defence are liable to be called upon to serve in the Landsturm from their nineteenth to their forty-second year. Thus every Austrian is at the call of his country for twenty-two years, though only three, and perhaps no, years are spent in actual service. In addition, men who have passed through the active army are also liable to be called upon to serve as officers in the Landsturm until sixty years of age.

Russia adopted conscription in 1870. Purchase of freedom from service, though legally prohibited, is practised, eight hundred roubles (£127) being the usual sum. Some parts of Siberia and the Trans-Caucasus are still exempt from conscription. The period of service is from the twenty-first to the forty-third year. Four years are spent in the active army, fourteen in the reserve, and four in the Opeltschenie or militia. Men drafted into the artillery or cavalry spend five years with the colours and only thirteen in the reserve. Every year nine hundred and fifty thousand Russians become liable for service; but of these only two hundred and seventy thousand enter the active army, the remainder being passed direct into the militia for twenty-two years. Seventy per cent. of all conscripts are unable to read or write; and, as they are taught the rudiments of knowledge while in the army, conscription may be regarded as a system of education. The Cossacks form a separate class; they pay no taxes, instead of which they are bound to give their military services for fifteen years. They enter the corps at eighteen, and after three years' training pass into the front brigade for twelve years. Cossacks are obliged to provide and maintain their own horses, clothing, and equipment. About sixteen thousand Cossacks enter the army every year.

All Italians are liable to military service from twenty to thirty-nine. The usual exemptions are permitted, and one-year volunteers are also allowed. The conscripts are divided into three classes. Those balloted into the first class spend nine years (five of which are spent on furlough) in the active army and ten years in the militia. Conscripts of Class II. spend eight years in the active army, with unlimited leave—which means that they receive no training, but are liable for eight years to be called upon to enter the active army. They are then drafted into the militia for eleven years. Class III. includes all other conscripts; they receive no training, but for nineteen years are liable to be drafted into the territorial militia. Thus very large numbers of Italian conscripts receive no training at all, financial considerations forbidding it.

In Belgium there is an eight years' compulsory service; but, as only fourteen thousand men are needed annually, substitution and purchase are freely allowed. Compulsory service for nine years, without substitution, is the law in Holland. One year is spent in the infantry, one and a half in the cavalry and artillery, and the remainder in the reserves. In Sweden there is a twenty years' service—eight with the colours and twelve in the reserve; and in Denmark sixteen years. Service is compulsory on all for eight years in Spain or four years in the colonies, though freedom may be purchased for £60. In Turkey all Moslems are liable to compulsory service, but Christians and other sectarians can purchase exemption. The Turk spends four years in the Nizam or active army, two years in the reserves, eight in the Redif or Landwehr, and six in the Mustahfurz or Landsturm. Thus, from twenty to forty the Osmanlis are liable to military service. Though Switzerland is the only country in the world which possesses no standing army—the constitution forbidding it—military training is compulsory on all males. The Japanese introduced conscription in 1874, every male being liable to military service from seventeen to forty. Three years are spent in the active army, and the remainder in the reserves. Those who escape active training are numbered among the militia for the whole twenty-three years. Six years' (from nineteen to twenty-five) compulsory service is in force in Egypt; but as only fifteen hundred men are required annually, and one hundred and fifty thousand men reach the age of nineteen every year, the burden is a very light one. Compulsory service is general in the South American Republics. In Brazil it is partly compulsory and partly voluntary. Each province must provide a fixed number of recruits, and if enough volunteers do not enlist, the requisite number is made up by conscription. The standing army of the United States has heretofore been a small one; but in time of national danger all men from the age of eighteen to forty-five may be called to arms.

Thus it will be seen that Britain is practically the only country that still recruits her army by voluntary enlistment. Under the Anglo-Saxons every freeman was bound to give three months' military service every year. The feudal system cannot be called forced service, as the military service was a condition of and quit-rent for the tenure of land. But as the feudal system died out, forced levies became common. It was with these that Elizabeth waged her wars in Ireland and James II. crushed Monmouth's rebellion; and it was the press-gang which recruited the army and navy for the Napoleonic wars of this century. Thus the constitution has always recognised the liability of every man to be called upon to fight for his country. Even now, by the Ballot Act of 1860, all males over five feet two inches

in height and between the ages of eighteen and thirty are liable to be called upon to serve in the militia. Though this act is suspended every year by the Army Annual Act, it could at any time be brought into force. So near home as the Channel Islands all natives of physical fitness between sixteen and forty-five years of age are liable to be called upon to serve in the militia, refusal to do so being punishable by fine or imprisonment.

Militarism in Europe—despite the Tsar's rescript—has not yet reached its zenith. All the states are

increasing their armies and navies; and the course which Great Britain will have to take the future alone can decide. A great military power Britain is not, nor aspires to be; but if she is going to maintain her army and navy on the same relative scale with the other Powers, conscription in one form or another appears inevitable. This question will most probably form the burning one of the near future; and it will then be for Britain to determine if she will sacrifice her sons, as well as her wealth, for the maintenance of the integrity of the Empire.

LADY STALLAND'S DIAMOND:

A STORY OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

CHAPTER V.

CIRCUMSTANCE is the test of a man's quality; his conduct in a crisis the standard of his value.' The Bishop closed the book impatiently. Mr Dallis looked up from his paper and smiled. They were both sitting on one of the lawn seats.

'What is the matter?' he asked. 'Is it very poor?'

'It is absurd,' said the Bishop. 'Absurd—inane! It is time to restrict this man's output;' and rising hastily, he stepped into the drawing-room to replace the volume upon a table.

Commander Digby, as usual, was there, and looked up as he entered. The Bishop gave him a glance of doubt and questioning, not unmingled with a little curious but pardonable resentment. He remembered that this fellow-guest had checked his plans more than once by his apparent desire to lounge in that corner chair as often and as long as he possibly could. Such conduct seemed utterly thoughtless and unreasonable.

But now the Commander rose, with a little gesture of relief.

'I give it up,' he said lazily. 'I am afraid that it won't work.'

'What do you mean?' asked the Bishop, in natural surprise.

'My little plan, or rather my theory,' answered Commander Digby. 'It's about that diamond.'

'Oh, indeed!'

The Commander proceeded to explain. 'I'll tell you how it is,' he said; 'it's a rather curious case, because you are in it yourself. Do you know, I have an idea that Lady Stalland's diamond was picked up by one of the servants.'

'Indeed?' said the Bishop again. He was looking out through the window with no sign of particular interest.

'Yes. Ignorance and sudden temptation, you know—just as I suggested at the dinner-table when the loss was discovered. But an idea occurred

to me yesterday morning while I was dressing, and it was this: If one of the servants took the stone, she would probably soon regret the theft. As soon as she realised its value, and as soon as the loss was discovered, she would be frightened, and would begin to wish she hadn't touched it. Then her one thought would be—What do you think?'

'To hide it,' suggested the Bishop deceitfully; for he saw what was coming.

'Not at all—not at all. Her one thought would be to return it to the spot from which she had taken it. I am presuming, you observe, that it was one of those silly women. No man would do such a mad thing.'

The Bishop nodded agreement.

'As soon as I thought of this,' continued the Commander, 'I determined to work it out. I came down early yesterday morning—you were down only just before me, if you recollect—almost expecting to find the diamond somewhere on the floor. It was not there, so I concluded that the woman had not yet had a chance to replace it. I calculated, however, that she would hang about the drawing-room until she found her opportunity, and that until she had found it she would look into the room just three times as often as any other person. That would be something after the style of the moth and the candle, you know. Therefore, I resolved to keep a good lookout and watch faces, keeping in the room as much as possible. In fact, I have scarcely left the place for a minute except when I was bound to do so, or when there was some one else here.'

'That is true,' thought the Bishop. 'You haven't.'

'You will understand, of course, that I am not qualifying for a thief-catcher,' the Commander said apologetically. 'I have been doing this for the simple purpose of testing my little theory. But it hasn't worked out as well as I expected. You'll never guess who has made the largest

number of visits to this room since yesterday morning.'

The Bishop might have made a very creditable guess. He thought it wiser not to try.

'It is yourself,' said the Commander.

'Dear me!' exclaimed the Bishop. 'Dear me, how very remarkable!' and he looked suitably startled and impressed. What a deceitful Bishop he had become since Saturday!

'Yes,' proceeded Commander Digby, rising from his chair. 'You have come into this room exactly twenty-three times since yesterday morning. As for the servants, why, not one of them has acted a bit suspiciously, and it is evident that my theory was weak somewhere. I'll give up detective work after this.'

The Bishop smiled. If the Commander's eye had been nearly as keen as his theory, he must have noticed the sickliness of that smile; but he did not notice, and in a moment more had passed out to join Mr Dallis on the lawn.

The Bishop was glad to see him go, for he was plainly a dangerous man. Standing alone on the hearth-rug, he wondered how many more threads he had yet to come upon in this tangled skein.

It was now Monday morning, and he was looking forward with feverish eagerness to the hour of his departure. As far as he was aware, no fresh movement had yet taken place. Sir Edward had said nothing at breakfast, and Mr Fitchett was invisible. Things were quiet, and he began to think that they would remain in that state until he could settle them. His letter to-morrow morning would do it.

He had passed another miserable night—a night such as he had often read of but never experienced before. As the hours had followed one another, his self-scorn had magnified his fault into something quite unlike itself. His old assurance, his self-confidence, had vanished utterly with his self-respect. He had learned that he was nothing better than a contemptibly weak mortal, doing wrong because he dreaded the opinions of his fellow-men. He was not Saturday's Bishop of Hexminster, but some other feeble and unworthy creature who had in a mysterious way found himself in lawn.

So he mused now, standing on the rug where all his trouble had commenced, and looking vacantly at the bronzes on the mantelpiece. But suddenly his glance fell upon a mirror which reflected the portions of the room behind him, and the region of the door; and he saw that some one was watching him from the doorway.

At first he was naturally startled, but had the presence of mind not to look round. He examined the face of the watcher carefully, and saw that it was the face of a woman—a young woman. Something, partly memory, partly intuition, told him that it was the face of little Miss Connie's nurse.

In another moment he saw more. The expression on the girl's face was not the expression of one who watches as a spy. True, there was a certain furtiveness about it, and she evidently did not intend to be seen; but that was not all. There was a great deal of anxiety in the manner of her gaze, as though she wished, almost as much as she feared, to attract attention; and, above all, there was a look of eager appeal not for a moment to be mistaken.

Still watching, motionless, the Bishop tried to imagine a reason for this curious conduct. She wanted something; that was clear enough. That her want was in some way connected with himself seemed equally clear. She was on very good terms with Martin, as he knew. Ah, yes—Martin!

The Bishop gave a start, as a horrible suggestion came to his mind, and the face vanished abruptly from the doorway. The house, he now noticed, was unusually quiet; but it was a quiet which had in it a hint of impending danger. Where was Sir Edward? Where was Lady Stalland? Where was Fitchett? He reached the door in three strides, just in time to hear light footsteps hastening down one of the farther corridors.

He stood for a minute irresolute. Then the second footman happened to emerge from the dining-room.

'Where is Martin?' asked the Bishop.

'In the library, my lord.'

'Who is with him? Is your master there?'

'Yes, my lord; and her ladyship, and the strange gentleman.'

'Thank you,' said the Bishop; and the second footman, dismissed, went his way, wondering.

The Bishop stood in the hall for several moments longer, and then proceeded to the library. On his way he was obliged to pass the stairs, and one who was slowly descending greeted his appearance with a cry of recognition:

'Oh, there's my wobber!'

The Bishop looked up. This time the child's greeting caused him no tremor.

'Wobber!' she cried, 'have you seen nurse? I've lost her.'

He remembered the face at the drawing-room door. 'Yes, my dear,' he said. 'I think she is down here.' And he prepared to pass on.

But there was something still to be said. The child was now on the fourth step, looking full into his face. What she read there, with the marvelous and unreasoning perception of childhood, must have produced her next question:

'Is the game finished, wobber? Is it over? Are you going to give up the diamond you wobbled?'

The question was cruel, heartless, almost triumphant; but the face of the questioner was full of sun and laughter. The Bishop answered mildly, yet speaking with difficulty:

'I think so, my dear—I think so—I fear so.'

'In the lib'wy?' asked Connie. 'Where papa is? Then I'se coming with you.' And before he could protest or object she had descended the remaining steps and had taken him by the hand. Half-unwillingly he submitted, and they went on together.

In the library Sir Edward Stalland sat at the writing-table, with his back to the door. At his right stood Lady Stalland, and before him, with the table between, Martin the footman. Inspector Fitchett was also there.

The entrance of the Bishop and his companion took place at a singular point in the proceedings. Sir Edward had just asked a question.

'So you refuse to speak, Martin? You have nothing more to say?'

It was a final question, and Martin had answered it finally:

'Nothing, Sir Edward.'

A pause had followed—a pause curiously suggestive of a deadlock. It was during the pause that the new-comers entered. Their appearance was received by Lady Stalland with a sigh of relief, and Sir Edward evidently shared her emotion. Martin's obstinate features relaxed a little, but the inspector made no sign.

'Oh, my dear Bishop,' cried Lady Stalland, 'I am glad you have come in! This is a most unhappy affair.'

The Bishop inclined his head gravely, and looked at Sir Edward. 'Can I do anything?' he asked.

Then the baronet spoke abruptly. 'We have been questioning Martin,' he said; 'you know the circumstances, and you can imagine why we should have done so. We simply ask him whether he has seen anything, or whether he knows anything, of his mistress's diamond. He refuses to answer.'

'Either "Yes" or "No,"' interposed Fitchett quietly.

'Either "Yes" or "No,"' repeated Sir Edward.

There was another long pause. With the exception of the child, who was gazing at her elders in wide-eyed surprise, every one seemed distinctly uncomfortable. Sir Edward and Lady Stalland waited for the Bishop's opinion, and wondered at his sternness and pallor; while Martin hung his head low. But the most troubled of the whole group was probably Inspector Fitchett.

For something was going awry with his plans. When Martin had been called in a few minutes before—when the footman had found himself face to face with this old acquaintance—everything had seemed to be going right enough. The man's amazement, his dismay, his evident guilt and fear, had gladdened the officer's heart with prospects of speedy success. Then Sir Edward had asked the fellow a question, and a check had taken place at once.

He had never expected a refusal to answer. Denial would have been natural, and he had been fully prepared to hear a long tissue of falsehoods and protestations. He had been still more prepared to witness a collapse, a confession, and a pitiful appeal for mercy. But silence might mean anything, and he did not forget that the whole of the evidence was purely circumstantial. He watched the faces and waited, his small blue eyes half-closed.

'Of course,' said Sir Edward, 'since he refuses to speak, I have only one thing to do. There is no alternative.'

The next remark came from the most unlikely quarter. It was spoken in a small voice, full of indignant surprise:

'But Martin isn't a wobbler. He isn't a bit of a wobbler!'

'Ha!' said Inspector Fitchett to himself; 'what is this?' Lady Stalland frowned at the child, and Sir Edward turned impatiently. Seeing, however, that she held the Bishop's hand, he said nothing. It was the Bishop who silenced her by a whisper of 'Hush!' The others had been surprised at her remark, but he had been alarmed.

He had come to settle this matter himself, and she must not do it for him. In Martin's face he saw that the game was not yet really over—that the man was prepared to keep silence. He would keep silence, at least, until to-morrow, when all would be set to rights. But the Bishop had brushed the thought aside with contempt. He was a man once more.

His emotions of the night had culminated in a sudden revival of his fugitive courage. Face to face with this crisis in affairs, he became himself again. Martin's conduct was a revelation, and the revelation a stimulant. While his weakness had been without hurt to others he had indulged it; had allowed it to lead him into doubtful places, into evasions, shufflings, almost into baseness. Now he saw another man accused in his stead, and it was another matter. So there was something heroic in the way in which he faced the group and prepared to own his error. In spite of his pallor, he had never been so like a Bishop, so like a man.

'I am sorry,' he began—'I am sorry that Martin should have been suspected in connection with the loss of the diamond. It is a great mistake.'

He paused, to allow his words to have their full effect. Inspector Fitchett heard them with growing uneasiness, the others with surprise. Martin looked up in breathless anxiety. But at that critical moment there came a slow *tap, tap, tap* from the edge of the table where the Bishop stood, and Miss Connie was heard to count in a loud whisper, 'One, two, three!'

The Bishop heard, but did not look down. He had more to say, and lost no time.

'I have already told Inspector Fitchett,' he said, with a stern glance at the officer, 'that I have

every confidence in Martin's integrity, despite what occurred a few years ago. I have the very highest reasons for this confidence.'

Tap, tap, tap—'Four, five, six,' counted Miss Connie, in quiet disdain of all that was passing. And there the Bishop paused, exactly on the verge of his confession. The others were looking at him no longer—all eyes were upon the child at his side.

He looked down. On the edge of the table were six pieces of glass. At the same instant she raised her eyes triumphantly—the child who had placed them there.

'You wobbled one of my diamonds,' she said; 'but I had six all the time. *I found one more on the carpet!*'

The pallor of the Bishop's face seemed to deepen as the last words were borne in upon his understanding. His lips were parted, and he stared vacantly, first at the articles on the table, then at the countenances of those around him. Mr Fitchett's eyes were wide open for once, and the word he uttered was short and sharp. Martin's expression was one of astonishment, and so was Lady Stalland's. But Sir Edward, with an exclamation quite as abrupt as the detective's, picked up one of the six glass diamonds and gazed at it fixedly.

There was a brief pause. The object Sir Edward held was smaller than the other five, but it gleamed with tenfold lustre.

'What is it?' gasped the Bishop. 'Is it the—is it the?'

'Yes,' said Sir Edward quietly; 'it is. It is the lost diamond!'

To the Bishop's gaze, the faces around him were hazy at that moment. He gripped the edge of the table to steady himself. His companions began to speak, excitedly, wonderingly; but he did not hear what they said. He was recalling the incidents of Saturday night, the words of the child, the finding of the diamond, and the truth was coming home to him—the real truth this time. Had he been mistaken all along? Had he suffered all those agonies needlessly? Could it be possible?

Slowly he took from its place of concealment the other diamond—the one he had found. With a sickly smile, he laid it down beside the others. It was exactly like them. Then he looked at Miss Connie.

'That's *my* diamond,' she said, nodding in complete understanding. 'That's *my* diamond. You've been a make-believe wobbler ever since Saturday; but now the game is over;' and she gathered up the toys in her chubby hands with every sign of satisfaction and delight.

Yes, the game was over. Again the Bishop smiled. The child's words were quite true. He had been only a make-believe robber after all. But what a terrible game it had been! He had been playing in dead earnest.

Half-an-hour later Inspector Fitchett was being driven away in the dog-cart, muttering sundry opinions as to the 'infernal meddlesomeness' of children and the stupidity of their parents. Sir Edward was telling his guests in the drawing-room how the diamond had at last been found in the very spot where no one had dreamed of looking for it; and Miss Connie was reflecting upon the really excellent way in which a bishop can make-believe to be a robber. The Bishop himself, after a short interview with Lady Stalland, was speaking to Martin in the hall. The incident of the lost diamond was over and done with, and the Bishop was, to all appearance, the Bishop of last week, benign but dignified, affable but stately. Yet this interview and one which followed it indicated that there had been a change.

'Martin,' he said kindly as the man came up, 'I have been thinking of what you told me on Saturday evening. Your words gave me great pleasure, and I shall be glad to try you once more in my own service.'

'Yes, my lord,' said Martin humbly. Since he had discovered the injustice of his late suspicions the poor fellow had not dared to look his lordship in the face.

'As it happens,' the Bishop continued, 'my butler, Gannet, will be leaving at the end of the quarter. If you think you could take his place you may write to me in a day or two. I have mentioned the matter to Lady Stalland already.'

And with that the Bishop passed on. Martin stood still, thinking it over, and the more he thought of it the more astonished he became. Why, the butler at the Palace had a house all to himself. A house, of course, meant a wife to keep it; and a wife— But when his meditations had reached that point he hurried away to find Miss Connie's nurse.

The other interview indicating a change in the Bishop took place at lunch. The story of the diamond had, of course, to be retold, and Sir Edward concluded the tale with an expression of surprise.

'What puzzles me,' he said, 'is Martin's silence. I can't imagine why he should have refused to answer the question I asked him.'

'Ah,' said Commander Digby, 'I shouldn't trouble about that. Perhaps the man was hurt, and some people get obstinate when they feel insulted. He felt himself in Fitchett's black books, you know.'

The Commander's suggestion was generally considered satisfactory, and the matter dropped. Mrs Digby, who was again the Bishop's neighbour, then turned to another subject.

'By the way,' she began, 'you remember the case we were speaking of the other night. That man has been brought before the magistrates.'

The Bishop remembered very well. 'Indeed?' he said. 'What was the result?'

'He reserved his defence,' answered Mrs Digby, 'and he hinted that he was the victim of circumstances. Of course that's all nonsense, as you said on Saturday. Circumstances, indeed!'

It was a minute or more before the Bishop replied. 'Hem!' he said slowly but clearly. 'I have been thinking over that remark, and have slightly changed my opinion. If the man pleads circumstances, I shall be inclined to wait a little. Circumstances, you know, my dear Mrs Digby'—

'Yes,' murmured the lady as he paused. 'Circumstances'—

'Often alter cases,' the Bishop concluded calmly.

It seemed a very trite, a very aged remark; yet when he held it up to criticism he saw that he could not have said anything more representative of his own changed, enlightened views. Mrs Digby subsided into wondering silence, entering the last

remark in her mental note-book for future use. How broad-minded the dear Bishop was!

As I have already said in other words, the Bishop of Hexminster is famous for his sympathy with the faults and failings of his fellow-men, and for his reluctance to judge them hastily. He is always ready to consider the argument of circumstances; but even his most intimate friends cannot guess that this is because circumstances on one occasion made him almost a criminal, and showed him in his own conduct the helplessness and the weakness of even the most upright of men and bishops. His admirers do not know this, and probably will not credit the story when they read it; but the Bishop's own character, in its increased charm and attractiveness, is the best possible evidence of his short and unhappy connection with Lady Stalland's diamond.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A RELIC OF BYGONE TIMES.



VERY curious and interesting discovery has been made by a local antiquary, Mr W. A. Donnelly, on the shores of the river Clyde, about a mile east of Dumbarton Castle. Here has been found the remains of a 'cranog,' or dwelling on piles, the structure being situated below high-water mark and about fifty yards from the water at low tide. Its circumference is one hundred and eighty-four feet, the outer circle of piles being of oak sharpened to a point with stone axes, and still perfectly sound where the wood has been buried in the ground. The other woods used in this ancient dwelling-place of man are birch, ash, &c., and are used for the transverse beams and for the pavements. Twelve feet outside the structure extends a huge refuse-heap, in which have been found the bones of dogs, cattle, sheep, &c., a hone or whetstone, and distinct evidences of the use of fire. In the immediate neighbourhood has also been discovered a canoe, thirty-seven feet long, with a beam of four feet, and hollowed out of a single oak-tree. This pile-dwelling is of more than ordinary interest in that it seems to be the first which has been found in tidal water.

ALUMINIUM FOR INDIA.

Aluminium, which is now used in Great Britain for such a variety of purposes, has recently been introduced into Madras, and cooking-pots and other utensils which used to be made of copper and brass are now being manufactured of the white metal. Professor Chatterton, of the Madras University, has been the mainspring of this new

departure, for he caused experiments to be made at the metal-working classes of the School of Arts at Madras, and in this way interested the natives in the matter. As a result a small factory was established, and this met with such signal success that in five months the output of manufactured aluminium amounted to a ton a month. This, be it remembered, would be equal, bulk for bulk, to four times as much copper. It is considered curious that the intense conservatism of the Indians should have allowed such an innovation to succeed; but on one point they are obdurate. The old shapes and fashions of vessels must be rigidly adhered to in making them of the new material, and as these shapes vary in different districts, the point is one of some importance.

ALUMINIUM *versus* STONE.

A German firm of colour-printers, Messrs Scholz, of Mainz, are credited with the introduction of a printing surface of which the metal aluminium is the base, which is found to be a most efficient substitute for the unwieldy and heavy lithographic stone. The metal is coated with a chemical surface which has the property of absorbing water like the stone, and has also, when dry, a like affinity for fatty inks. The artist can make his design direct on the surface, so that it is not vitiated by interference from another hand; and such design, when it has served its purpose, can be readily removed to make room for another without the long process of grinding down which is necessary with a drawing on stone. One of these new plates can thus be used for hundreds of times, and they are so thin that a hundred and fifty of them occupy only the space of one lithographic stone. It is to be hoped that

this new process of printing will be demonstrated at the exhibition of lithography which will probably be opened in London before these words appear in print.

THE PLAGUE.

Dr F. G. Clemow contributes to the *Lancet* some very interesting facts regarding the plague epidemic in Calcutta, which go far to prove that rats were responsible for the introduction of the disease into that city. It seems certain that rats, in common with dogs, pigs, pigeons, and domestic fowls, are liable to be affected by the disease, and that, some time before the occurrence of a single case of plague among the human inhabitants of Calcutta, it was reported to the health officer that a number of dead rats had been found in a building near the river. Shortly afterwards more dead rats were found in a street close by and in the offices of a shipping company near to the wharf where ships unload. This discovery, from its unusual character, attracted much attention, and as a precautionary measure disinfectants were largely used. Subsequently some of the dead rodents were examined at the municipal laboratory, and found to be infected with the plague bacillus. Since this time dead rats have been found in the city in large numbers, and more especially in and about the houses where cases of human plague have occurred.

A NEW USE FOR THE TELEPHONE.

The monotony of farm life in Australia, where houses are few and far between, has recently been modified by an ingenious use of the telephone. It would hardly have paid any one to lay wires from farm to farm, for those buildings are often separated by many miles of open country; but some one found that the wire fences which are in common use were most efficient lines of communication for telephonic purposes; and the discovery has resulted in friendly intercourse being established between the members of families separated from one another by as much as a dozen miles. A number of different stations are now connected together in this way, and we can readily understand what comfort the thought must bring to the members of an isolated household that they are, in case of emergency, within call of fellow-beings.

MAKING HASTE TO BE RICH.

That there are hundreds of persons who still believe in the possibility of perpetual motion, the philosopher's stone, and other myths of bygone times is well known. But there was certainly some excuse for those who recently invested their savings in the Electrolytic Marine Salts Company of America, whose ostensible business it was to extract gold from sea-water; for it is a scientific fact that the waters of the ocean do contain a certain proportion of the precious metals in solu-

tion. According to *Cassiers' Magazine*, the trick by which the subscribers were induced to part with their money was simple but decidedly clever. They were invited to witness a most conclusive experiment which took place in a shed which projected over the water at the end of a pier. Through a trap in the floor a pan of mercury—and it should be noted that the capitalists had brought the metal with them in order that they might be assured of its initial purity—was let down into the sea. An electric battery was then connected up with it, and the current allowed to act upon the sunken mercury for several hours; while the men with the money-bags kept watch the whole night through in order to see that all was fair. In the morning the pan of quicksilver was raised from the sea-bottom and its contents at once assayed, when the metal was found to be heavily charged with gold. It is supposed that during the night a diver was employed to substitute the valuable amalgam for the pure mercury in the submerged pan. However this may have been, the 'inventor' of the process has disappeared with some sixty-eight thousand pounds, which represent the profits on the transaction, obtained not from sea-water, but from the pockets of the credulous.

THE TRANSPORT OF TIMBER.

A huge raft of timber six hundred feet long, cigar-shaped, with a central diameter of fifty feet, was recently towed from the Columbia River to San Francisco, a distance of seven hundred miles, in five and a half days. The weather was certainly very favourable for the venture; but the event is noteworthy for the reason that this is the largest structure of the kind which has ever entered the above-mentioned port. Other consignments of the same nature and equally large are now being arranged for, this method of transport having several advantages. The number of piles contained in this cable-bound raft was ten thousand, each pile consisting of a log of timber from thirty to forty feet long, with a diameter at the butt-end of about eighteen inches—in all the raft comprised five million lineal feet of timber. To convey a similar cargo piecemeal by steamer in the old-fashioned method of stowage, twenty vessels of the largest capacity would have been required, while the expense would have been trebled. It is intended later on to economise still more by transporting timber which has already been sawn into square logs.

RECOVERING A LOST BELL.

A story told not long ago to an audience at the United Service Institute, London, is illustrative of the fact that native instinct—or shall we call it common-sense?—will sometimes solve a problem which technical training fails to grapple with successfully. During the second Burmese war the British troops endeavoured to carry off to Calcutta,

as a trophy, a big bell the weight of which was more than forty tons. The engineers managed to get it as far as the river Irawadi; but, in trying to get it on shipboard, the tackle slipped and the unwieldy thing rolled over and disappeared beneath the water. After trying in vain to raise the bell from the river-bed, the engineers were forced to admit that the task was beyond them, and went their way. Then the Burmese went to work, and, strange to say, they soon accomplished the task in which the British had failed. They first of all encased the upper part of the bell in a wooden structure, so as to convert its external form into that of a cylinder, and they then, by means of ropes, rolled it up the river-bank on to dry land. It is obvious that the water must have been very shallow to admit of this method of procedure.

CLOCKS WHICH TALK.

A very curious development of Edison's famous phonograph is found in the speaking clocks and watches now being manufactured in Switzerland, timepieces which altogether throw into the shade the old 'repeaters,' which on the pressure of a stud would strike, or 'repeat' the last hour. In the new form of watch a button is pressed; but, instead of the stroke of a bell, the owner is informed of the time in articulate speech. Alarm-clocks are also made; but instead of the usual vibratory bell, they call out, 'It's six o'clock. Up you get, and don't go to sleep again.' These talking clocks and watches are due to the ingenuity of a French manufacturer who has settled in Geneva. In order to make his wares talkative, he introduces into the works a disc of india-rubber, which on its edge bears the necessary phonographic 'record'—in connection, we presume, with a vibrating diaphragm.

MOVING A HOUSE.

By the term 'moving house' is meant in this country the unpleasant operation of shifting one's belongings from one domicile to another; but in America it is the house itself—roof, walls, bricks, and mortar—that is moved. This wondrous engineering feat has been accomplished so often that it ceases to excite much remark among our transatlantic cousins, but, for some undiscovered reason, the work of house-shifting never seems to be undertaken in Britain. The Continent has, however, afforded at least one example of this mode of changing the site of residence, for a few months ago a house which interfered with the enlargement of a German railway-station was pushed along for three hundred and fifty feet to its new situation. The entire journey was accomplished in seventeen days, the structure, with its cellars and various stories all complete, being supported on rollers and thrust forward by jacks. The house weighed seven hundred and fifty tons. The operation was completed without

the cracking of a single pane of glass, and the entire expense was half the estimated cost of pulling the building to pieces and setting it up again on its new foundations.

A CURIOUS CASE OF SOMNAMBULISM.

The modern novelist is very prone to found his plots on the doings of sleep-walkers and hypnotists; but, as usual, 'truth is stranger than fiction,' and his efforts are outdone by actual occurrences. Here, for example, is a true story from France of a gentleman missing from his bedroom a packet containing more than two thousand pounds' worth of bonds. The thief could not be traced; but shortly afterwards the mistress of the house, who had taken the robbery to heart even more than her husband, was taken to a doctor, for she was suffering from nervous prostration. The doctor, a firm believer in hypnotism, was told of the robbery; and, putting two and two together, hypnotised his patient and extorted a confession from her that she had taken the bonds and buried them in the garden. There, upon search being made, they were found; but the lady is as yet quite ignorant of the fact that she herself was the person who hid them.

A RECENT EGYPTIAN DISCOVERY.

It has hitherto been supposed that in Egypt the practice of embalming the bodies of the dead and forming them into mummies was the most ancient method of sepulture; but Professor Flinders Petrie, the well-known Egyptologist, has, by recent excavations, thrown quite a new light upon this question of the ancient method of disposing of the dead. At Deshasheh, a place about fifty miles south of Cairo, he has discovered a series of tombs, in the coffins of which he has found complete skeletons from which the flesh has been carefully dissected, evidently previous to burial. The coffins are of admirable workmanship, are made of sycamore, and are in perfect preservation, notwithstanding their five thousand years' burial in the sand. It remains to be proved by further excavations whether the mutilation of the bodies was performed as a ceremonial rite, or whether this removal of flesh from the bones points to cannibalism on the part of the ancient people.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

It would seem that the business of insuring against train accidents must be a very profitable one, for, according to the most recent statistics—those for last year—the risks to human life in travelling by railway are of the slightest. The figures refer to accidents in the United Kingdom only; and we gather from them that only one person was killed among every eight millions carried, while only one person in six hundred and twenty-eight thousand was injured. It would, therefore, appear that it would be far safer to travel all day by rail than to venture upon the

ordinary risk incurred in going up and down stairs in one's own household. It is quite needless to state that the danger of crossing the crowded streets of our large cities and towns is vastly greater than any incurred in taking a journey by railway. It is sad to see, at the same time, that the number of railway servants killed and injured—especially during shunting operations—maintains a terribly high average; and we are glad to note that steps are being taken to ascertain whether there is anything in the practice adopted on foreign railway systems which can be introduced here with a view to lessen the number of fatalities which occur.

DISCOVERIES AT POMPEII.

It is quite certain that no excavations have ever aroused so much general interest as those which have been in progress for so many years at Pompeii. This is no doubt due to the awfully tragic manner in which the place was overwhelmed by the ashes from Vesuvius nearly two thousand years ago. Contrary to popular belief, it was not flowing streams of lava that did the mischief, but ashes mingled with a deluge of rain, which sealed up the houses under twenty feet of mud, which has long ago solidified. Only a comparatively small portion of the city has as yet been uncovered once more to the light of day; but the work is still progressing, and it does not lose in interest. One of the most recent discoveries is that of the site of a small but most beautiful temple, which was evidently in course of construction when the city was overwhelmed. There are the various parts of the building, exquisite pieces of moulding, and Corinthian capitals, some half-executed, with the chisel-marks plainly visible upon the

stone, lying about ready to be placed in position, as they were left by the Roman workmen just previous to the catastrophe. There was also recently found buried outside the city walls a most exquisitely designed piece of mosaic pavement—a perfect picture in stone representing a group of seven philosophers in council. This noble work has been purchased by the Italian government, and will be added to the treasures of the Naples Museum.

SONNET.

THERE'S that more precious than the diamond's flame,
And beautiful as is the ruby's glow,
Or bloom of pearls: which gold indeed may maim,
And yet not easily again bestow:
Which giveth beauty grace, like scent to flowers;
Without which beauty is a rootless bloom:
Which raiseth bright-dressed thoughts, like vernal showers
The beaded grass, and gildeth sorrow's gloom.
It makes a beggar happy as a king:
A king who wants it is a fettered slave!
'Tis Manhood's very Sceptre; it may bring
Hope to the hero, courage to the brave!—
'Come, tell us, pray, what is this priceless wealth?'
What we are sponthrifts with, my friends—our
Health!

G. G. SOMERVILLE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

*Volume I. of the Sixth Series of CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL is now completed, price Nine Shillings.
A Title-page and Index, price One Penny, have been prepared, and may be ordered through any bookseller.
A cloth case for binding the whole of the numbers for 1898 is also ready.
Back numbers to complete sets may be had at all times.*

The January Part of Chambers's Journal (published about 21st December) will contain the opening chapters of a Romance of powerful interest by

GUY BOOTHBY

ENTITLED

'THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.'

Also Novelettes and Stories by other well-known writers of fiction.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

Chambers's Journal

EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

CONTENTS.

ORMON THE GULFER.	By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY.....	PAGE 1
THE SILVER JOSS.	By CHARLES EDWARDES.....	" 14
A PERFECT CURE.	By RICCARDO STEPHENS.....	" 39

CHRISTMAS 1898.

ORMON THE GULFER.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

AUTHOR OF 'STEVE BROWN'S BUNYIP,' 'IN THE GREAT DEEP,' ETC.

CHAPTER I.

ON WILD HORSE CREEK.

WELL, I reckon the claim's about worked out. Only a patch after all. What do you think? Not that that matters much.' 'Maybe another few weights left in the cracks; we can clear them up in the morning,' I replied, answering my mate Amos Ormon's ungracious speech as we sat outside our tents and smoked in the moonlight after supper.

In front of us, a quarter of a mile away, loomed a high range of scrubby hills, at whose foot, over shingly bars, ran Wild Horse Creek, a tributary of the Georgina.

Prospecting in half-hearted fashion, after many disappointments, here at last we had struck promising colours; pegged out a claim, sunk many shafts without much luck; and then, in the very last one that our rations would run to, bottomed on a patch worth the having. Our camp was in as secluded and solitary a spot as could be found in North-western Queensland; for, although the country was known to be auriferous, so few and far between had any finds been made that gradually prospectors had given it up in disgust, and moved on to the Cloncurry and other fields towards the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Amos Ormon was an old 'Gulfer'—a name by which the settlers and bushmen around the

shores of the Carpentarian Gulf are locally known—I had met and worked with for a short time as mate on the Gilbert diggings, whither I had drifted from a coasting brig that her skipper had managed to stick securely on the Horseshoe Reef, off Tribulation Island. I was mate of her; and the Cooktown Marine Board—although I had not been on deck at the time of the accident—having suspended my ticket for six months, I determined to try my luck ashore for at least that period.

Of my present mate I knew little. People in the bush work alongside each other for years in ignorance of the slightest personal detail. About forty, stout and 'nuggety' of build, with a flaming shock of red hair, thick fleshy nose, face burnt to a permanent brick colour, mouth hidden under a heavy moustache that lay almost white against the brown skin, and a pair of small, light-blue eyes, Amos hailed for an Australian native. But I always doubted this, because at odd times he rolled his 'r's' and burred them in a way that few men do unless to the manner born—between, say, Tweed and Tees. His temper for the most part was a cold and saturnine one, and there was no cordiality between us, although I strove by working my hardest to keep my end of the log up, and atone as much as possible for the lack of that practical experience as a miner that my companion pos-

sessed in a very high degree. A peculiarity of Ormon's was to look as if he was always brooding over something—always turning some project over and over in his mind with a ponderous secretiveness that feared discovery. Only a mannerism, likely enough, but an unpleasant one. Had there been any chance of getting a better mate, I would have long ago left him. But the majority of the Guffers on these tucker diggings—for they were little else—were as rowdy and drunken a lot of scoundrels at the time I write of as Australasia could produce. Though peculiar and often disagreeable, Amos was a big cut above any of the alleged diggers I had as yet come across, who, the greater part of them, struck me as in search of most things except gold.

My mate made no reply to my last remark, only smoked and pondered, whilst the moon rose higher, turning from yellow to white, and pouring floods of light over the flat at our feet, showing the red heaps of mullock from many 'duffers' stretching up from the creek-bank to the last shaft just in front of us—our 'golden hole.'

It had been a good season; grass was plentiful, and the steady klop-klop-klop of our knocking horse-bells came pleasantly to the ear in token of steady feeding; whilst the warm air was laden with the thick, heavy perfume of many species of beautiful flowering scrub. Our tents were pitched in the shade of a clump of blood-woods and Moreton Bay ashes, and just in front of them was a rough erection of four forks and rafters, bark-roofed to form a sort of cooking-place. Underneath this was the always smouldering fire, the camp oven, billies, pan, and other utensils. Another similar structure, only covered in with bushes and furnished with table and seats of split slabs, served as dining-room. In all these matters Ormon was most methodical and painstaking. Remnants of food bring ants about a place, and one, even, of those insects in his tent made him restless and uncomfortable. As to his personal habits, they were those of a cat. He would wash himself a dozen times a day, always preferring to get away out of sight to a water-hole in the creek; the least smudge from pot or billy on his fingers made him palpably uneasy until it was off; and he spent all Sunday combing and brushing, clipping and cleaning about his body, in an excess of fastidiousness that would have been remarkable even in civilised places, but that a thousand miles from them, in the heart of the wild bush, was simply wonderful.

Under the rude table in the dining-shed was 'planted' our most unexpected find, some thirty pounds' weight of nearly pure gold. I had sent up the first greenhide bucket full the preceding morning from a depth of fifty feet, seeing nothing out of the way in the usual mass of clay and water-worn gravel through which I

had worked in one corner of the shaft until I struck bed-rock of granite from which the pick-point bounded with the solid-sounding, unmistakable jar that echoes 'true bottom' to the miner's ear. But, as I was saying, I had shovelled the dirt into the bucket and sung out to 'Heave up!' possessing not the slightest suspicion that the stuff was thick with gold. So little had we seen of the noble metal for many a day that I simply worked away mechanically and without interest; having resolved, too, that, now my 'suspension' was expired, I would at once be off to sea again. Digging, I presumed, was all very well where one was getting something, if only tucker. But for weeks we had not made an ounce, and into the bargain worked like niggers and lived like Chinamen—principally on tough kangaroo meat, birds, and rice. My clothes were patched with gunny-bags, my boots all uppers, and, taking it full and by, I was about satisfied that I was not meant for a bush life.

Therefore, you can imagine my surprise when, as my shift finished and Ormon hove me up, the first thing to catch my eye was a big panning-off dish half-full of dull yellow lumps and specks in all imaginable shapes and sizes.

Characteristically enough, my mate had said not a word to me, toiling below, of the riches he was washing out of each bucket I sent up; and even now, as I stared in wonder at the pretty show, there was no answering gleam in his cold eye, no smile under the white thatch of his lips.

'Lower away,' was all he curtly said, after we had poured the gold into a stout sugar-bag and covered it with mullock. 'I expect it's only a patch. Don't try to wash anything till my shift's over. If anybody passes, tell 'em we're scarce-makin' tucker.'

The foot or so of wash-dirt on the bottom was soon cleaned up. Then we put in a drive, but there was nothing but heavy clay and rock. On every side it was the same; and by sundown my mate had quite satisfied himself that our find was but one of those rare pockets dropped upon now and then, but for the presence of which there seems nothing to account, and that led no farther.

'What's about the value of the gold we've got?' I asked presently.

'Nearly £1400,' he replied, 'taking it at £3, 17s. 6d. per ounce. Your share'll be, at that rate, close on £700. Not bad for a new elum like you, is it?'

'Capital!' I exclaimed buoyantly. 'I was thinking of making off to sea again; but if we can keep going in such fashion I'll stick to you a bit longer. Shall we try another shaft to-morrow?'

'Clean up the one we're at first,' said he; 'we might ha' missed a little on the bottom. And as for sticking to me, why, as regards that,

you can clear out as soon as you like. I don't want you, I'm sure.'

'Nor,' I replied hotly, 'do I want to force my company upon any man. We'll settle matters in the morning, then, and I'll get my horses, and leave.'

He was silent at this, apparently rather surprised to be taken so shortly at his word. Perhaps, now, it was the sense of having money in view that prompted me to so sharp an answer after often in times past letting similar remarks go unnoticed; but, in any case, I was very tired of the self-absorbed, taciturn, unsociable fellow, and, gold or no gold, had made up my mind to stand no more of his company and the hard, squalid life I had led of late.

'Well,' said he at last, turning towards me with a sullen note in his voice, 'I expect we'd better clean up first. There may be more there'n we think for. Then we can divide the lot. I'm goin' to stay on a bit longer yet; but I can work single-handed as well's with a mate.'

'All right,' I replied lightly. 'For my part, I'm off somewhere to get a square feed and some decent togs to wear—Brisbane, most likely. And now, as there's about as much flour left as'll make a small damper, I'll mix one up and put it in the ashes.'

'Right,' said he, but still in surly accents; 'and I'll take a rifle and see if I can't pot a kangaroo along the creek.'

I baked my damper, and setting it on its edge to cool, presently turned in. But Ormon had not come back when the Cross told me, through the open door of my tent, that it was midnight. Towards morning, however, waking, I could hear the incessant grinding of teeth that always marked his sleep—a horrid noise resembling nothing so much as the sharpening of a cross-cut saw.

I didn't turn in any more, but lit a pipe and strolled away over the ridges, thinking what I should do with all that money—pleasurable thoughts, accentuated mightily by the feel of my rags and nearly naked feet, not to mention a stomach that looked forward doubtfully to its breakfast.

CHAPTER II.

IN A TIGHT PLACE.



ORMON had shot nothing, and our breakfast of damper, rice, and sinewy kangaroo meat, some days old, made me in no way regret the resolution I had come to.

My companion was morose and preoccupied as ever. But so pleased was I at the notion of being able to get away, with a pocketful of money into the bargain, that I took little notice

of him, and felt intent only on finishing work and making a start for fresh and livelier scenes.

I descended first, and sent up some score of buckets full of dirt that had been left from the last drive we had put in. Then, carefully cleaning the bottom, even to picking out the wash from crevices with my fingers, until the rock was bare as a new-swept oven, I sang out to heave up the bucket, which was only about three-parts full.

'Better put the tools in,' said Amos, his head hanging over the shaft; 'they won't be wanted there any more.' So, hitching shovel and driving-pick to the rope, I watched the lot go swinging aloft, feeling glad and pleased that our partnership was ended, nor experiencing the slightest inclination to stay and search for more gold.

Presently, to my utter bewilderment, I became aware that Amos was taking the rope off the windlass.

'Hello!' I shouted. 'Have you forgotten that I'm here yet?'

Without making any reply, he kept on at his work, whilst strange suspicious and surmises flashed through my mind. In a minute or two more I saw him come to the edge of the logging and look down. Somehow, I felt I was putting a most useless question even as the words left my mouth and I asked, 'Why don't you lower the bucket?'

'Because I'm not going to pull you up,' he replied calmly. 'Did you think I was such a fool as to go halves with a new chum like you? All I took you as mate for was to get your luck. No men is luckier than new-chum sailors on a diggin's. Well, the luck's come, and I'm goin' somewhere' (mimicking my words) 'to find a square meal and decent togs. You'll stop there till somebody comes along or the shaft caves in. The chances are that you'll stop there altogether. You've always been growlin'—growlin' about your belly—since I knowed you. Well, you'll have somethin' to growl about now in real earnest.'

'Well, but, Amos,' I cried, now thoroughly scared, 'it's murder. A man might as well be in his gravo as here. Better take your rifle and shoot me at once as leave me to linger miserably. Hang it, man! lower the rope, and quit fooling in such a fashion.' These last words I spoke with a degree of assurance I was very far from feeling.

'I ain't foolin',' he replied promptly. 'I wasn't built that way. But I should be a fool to pull you up and make you a present of £700.'

'I'll take five,' I cried desperately, feeling that the brute was in deadly earnest.

'Four—three!' I shouted after a pause, as I saw the black dot of his head shaking in dissent. 'There,' I continued, 'for God's sake pull me up, and you can take the lot!'

But still his head wagged to and fro decidedly. 'No,' he said, rising and looking down at me over the empty windlass barrel; 'it ain't good enough. Once begin a contract, and you've got to go through with it. But,' he continued, speaking slowly and deliberately as ever, 'there's one thing I'll do for you if you really wants it.'

'Well,' I asked hurriedly and a little hopelessly.

'Well,' he continued, 'you asked me to shoot you just now. If you asks me again, and you'll stick the candle on the wall, back o' your head, I'll put a bullet through you clean as a whistle.'

For a minute I was too astounded at the cold-bloodedness of such a proposition to utter a word. All I could do was to stare up at him stupidly as he stood there, his features clearly outlined now against the patch of blue sunlit sky, with his heavy moustacho looking like a curved chalk-line drawn across his face under the thick-spreading nose.

'Very well,' I shouted all at once in a sudden access of fury; 'shoot and be d—d to you, you murderer!' Almost as I spoke he disappeared, and I guessed he had gone to fetch his rifle from the camp. All the same, I had not the remotest intention of being made a target of, hopeless as my case seemed. And I was perfectly convinced that shoot he would, and with as little compunction as at a kangaroo. I was but five-and-twenty, and at that age life still feels sweet, even when things look most gloomy. So, without more ado, I crawled backwards into one of the drives, and lay there with my head just inside of it, and screwed up towards the top of the shaft. Presently I saw a shadow cross the light, and heard the rattle of a rifle-butt.

'Hello!' he hailed. 'Where's that candle? I can't see. Changed your mind, eh?' he continued, as his sight, becoming accustomed to the darkness, made out that the bottom was empty. 'Well, so long; I can't wait here all day. I'll put the monoy to good use—better'n you'd ha' done. Sailors never have much sense, anyway. You've got your chance, and we may meet again bimebye.'

'I'll live to see you hanged yet!' I shouted.

'I can't spare the time just now, as I've got to pack up,' he replied; 'but if you say another word I'll fill you in.' And, as if to emphasise the threat, some great lumps of mullock came tumbling down the shaft. I burst into a cold sweat at the notion; for there was plenty of loose earth above that a strong man like Ormon could perhaps have buried me under in an hour or two. And, anyhow, if I came out of my tunnel, he might shoot me easily. Therefore I held my peace, and heard him walk away without taking other risk than cursing him most heartily under my breath. After a while I

heard the sound of horse-bells, and knew that he was catching the animals—two of mine, two of his own—preparatory to packing up and making a start.

He came near me no more; but for some time I stayed under cover, thinking perhaps he might change his mind and empty a rifle down the shaft before leaving. Presently, however, I smelt smoke, and, looking up, could see a cloud of it blowing across overhead. Evidently he had fired the camp, together with such articles as he found he could not conveniently carry. Coming out of my burrow, I stood in the middle of the hole and stared about me in a dazed sort of way, as if I had never seen the place. Indeed, I was utterly taken aback and dumfounded at the extraordinary turn things had taken with me during the last hour. Even now I was almost incredulous, and would not have been surprised to see Ormon appear with the saturnine grin his face sometimes wore, and busy himself fixing the rope again.

But as the day wore on any such vague hopes left me, and I felt there was nothing for it but to meet my doom with what courage I might. No more hopeless ease could well be conceived. The hole, nearly fifty feet in depth, was untimbered (being fair standing-ground in dry weather) and composed of stiff red clay and small gravel. It was, for a prospecting shaft, rather large—some five feet by four—oval in shape, and with sides almost perfectly plumb. Any attempt at climbing them was quite out of the question. Even with tools to make footholds it would have been a risky, if not impossible, business. Also, if it came on to rain—a heavy thunderstorm would suffice—most probably the whole shaft would cave in and bury me alive. I had never been in a really tight place before. But still, I could not for a time think of anything but the amazing treachery of my mate, nor quite recover from the stunning sensation that overpowered me when certain that I was deserted and left to perish miserably in that dark hole; and as I squatted on the rock floor I swore that if ever a day of reckoning came between us two, it should be a hard one for Amos Ormon. Human help, I knew too well, was almost out of the question in that secluded corner. Even if travellers came up Wild Horse Creek, only a quarter of a mile away, I should be none the wiser. I might yell myself hoarse without being heard, or at most be put down for a howling dingo. Besides, the main track to Birdsville—a slight and unfrequented one—ran along between the Creek and the Georgina, miles off. All these facts had been coursing athwart my mind mechanically as I sat and stared at the patch of sky that capped my prison, barred black against the blue by the barrel of the windlass. I had a pipe, some tobacco, a small knife, and a box of wax-vestas in my pocket. On a ledge over one of the drives was

a piece of candle about eight inches long. Terribly hungry, I bit a small junk off. It tasted more of resin than anything else, and I put it aside for future use, just then preferring a pipe. As I carefully shredded tobacco, four crows came and perched on the windlass barrel, and, peering down with ghastly white eyes—one variety of the Australian crow has white eyes—and heads cocked to one side, quark-quarked interrogatively, and then muttered to each other quite plainly, 'Wonder how long he'll last.' 'Not very long.' 'We'll pick his eyes and tongue out by-and-by, when he gets weak enough.' At least that's the sense I made of their low mummings and mutterings as they stared ghoulishly into the shaft. High aloft an eagle-hawk poised on stirless pinions, as if he knew that he too had an approaching feast in view. But the crows worried me with their continuous low rumbling palaver, broken occasionally by an impatient croak, and I shouted at them till they flew away. They soon, however, returned; and, as I sat quite still, one of them dropped a stick straight upon me to see if I was yet a fair subject to operate on. As I gave no sign he fluttered down a few feet, but flew back with a harsh croak of disappointment when I raised my head. More than once or twice as the afternoon slowly passed, during long spells of quietness, did the cunning black watchers let fall their test-sticks in similar fashion.

The tobacco soothed and calmed me, besides easing the gnawing pangs of hunger. As to thirst, I was secure from that. In one corner of the shaft, at minute intervals, a solitary drop of water fell and soaked away through a crevice in the rocky bottom. By kneading some of the tough clay into the shape of a basin, I had already caught enough for a drink. But I was not thirsty. It was damp and cool enough down there. I was desperately hungry, though, and would have tackled even a crow could I have laid hands upon him. Instead, I chewed another inch of my candle-end. It tasted more palatable at this second essay, and I wished there had been a larger supply.

Do my best, I could not make up my mind to die. The thing seemed quite unreasonable whilst my body felt so active with life and freedom smiled so near. In vain did I try and compose myself to meet the inevitable becomingly, renounce all worldly thoughts, and turn my mind to preparation and prayer. Instead, wild schemes of vengeance upon Amos Ormon flashed across my brain, mingled with acute agonies of regret for pleasant possibilities lost in the treasure he had robbed me of.

And so the daylight passed; the gloom grew thicker; the black watchers, with a parting growl and a muttered promise to return early, flew off to their roosts; tock-tock-tock-tock, measuring the minutes, fell the drop of water; the moan-

ing howl of a dingo came from the deserted camp, followed presently by an outburst of yells and cries betokening a full pack. And I sat there in the darkness and sucked gingerly at my remnant of candle, and watched the stars come out, and tried hard, but as yet in vain, to realise that my doom was indeed upon me, racking my brain instead to find some means of escape. But I could think of nothing that would enable me to scale those smooth prison walls my own hands had helped to fashion; and presently, aided by hunger, solitude, and darkness, cold Despair laid her chill fingers upon my heart as the long-kept-at-bay conviction that I must surely die tore its way into my soul. A most shockingly incredible and awful thing seemed my fate to me, and one that all the strong life and nature within me rose in wild protest against. And I raved and shrieked until the howling wild dogs ceased their concert in a fright; beat head and hands upon the rough, pick-grooved walls; kicked at them in insensate fury; and for a time became to all intents a raving, foaming maniac, maddened not so much by the fear of death as by the dreadful impotence to gain the life that lay visible within the few feet a child might almost hurl a stone to the summit of.

CHAPTER III.

SHAHBAZ KHAN.



SUPPOSE that at last I must have fallen faint and insensible from exhaustion, and remained so for hours, as when I came to myself again the moon was shining almost directly down the shaft. Lying on my back, feeling stiff and sore, I was staring hopelessly up at the great white orb, when all of a sudden she was blotted out by something that nearly filled the mouth of the shaft, whilst upon me fell showers of clay and gravel. Jumping to my feet in alarm, I snuggled into a corner and stared wonderingly aloft to where, as well as I could make out, the hind-legs of some large and powerful animal were playing a tattoo on the sides of the shaft as they hung down it, accompanied by the most hideous bellowings and screamings. That a horse or a bullock had slipped into the hole was my first notion. But neither of those animals could by any possibility; I fancied, make such extraordinary and barbarous noises as the brute above me was doing.

As, scared and wondering, I was about to retreat into a drive, thinking that presently the thing would come down by the run, there fell on my ears a chatter of human voices sounding sharp and shrill above the din of roarings and gurglings. Then, all at once, came a great noise of pulling and shouting, and little

by little I saw the animal, still complaining bitterly, pulled to the surface amidst much vociferous talk and laughter.

Now, thinking it my turn, I yelled at the top of a voice made strong by hope of succour. For a minute there was dead silence; then I saw several black and turbaned faces poked cautiously over the edge of the shaft where the moon made things light as day to my eyes.

'Hi, yali?' asked a voice. 'Who dar?'

'Me! me!' I replied hysterically. 'For God's sake send a rope down and pull me up!'

At this there was another outbreak of clamorous strange language, not a word of which could I understand as I listened with my heart beating my ribs black and blue, and the sweat rolling off me in fear of being left to perish. And never voice of mistress to lover sounded sweeter than when, after a minute, some one shouted:

'Ar ri! you wait—mendee windeelas.' And I heard a knocking and hammering, and saw men raising the windlass standards and replacing the barrel that the beast had knocked over in his struggles.

And presently down came a line of different-sized ropes knotted together, into which hastily putting a bowline and seating myself therein, I was, with much grunting and heaving, at last safely landed. As I stood up, weak and trembling, the dark-faced men who surrounded me fell back to right and left in something like dismay. And, as I afterwards discovered, not altogether without cause, for—hatless, shoeless, my clothes in ribbons, head and hands and feet bleeding from many self-inflicted cuts and bruises—I must have made a wild and forbidding spectacle. But food and a nip of good whisky that some kind soul produced, together with a wash in the creek, soon revived me sufficiently to tell my story to Shahbaz Khan, a great, handsome Afghan, owner of the camel-train, to whom I owed my rescue, who listened, stroking a long black beard with many expressions of sympathy and disgust.

By the merest chance, it appeared, they had that night camped on Wild Horse, intending to proceed after an hour or two's spell. Then one of the camels, straying, had slipped into the shaft, and so saved me from a most miserable fate. The train consisted of forty animals not long landed from a British India steamer at Cooktown, and was bound to Enela, in South Australia, thence to the new goldfields in the West. The men who had arrived with the camels from Aden were a wild enough looking lot; but the rest were old hands in the country; some of them even had been digging on the Palmer, and were well able to appreciate the treachery to which I had so nearly fallen a victim. Nor ever could I have conceived such friendly goodwill, help, and sympathy as I met with among these kindly people, upon whom

Australians generally look with aversion and dislike. Before I had finished my meal new clothes were being got ready for me out of Shahbaz Khan's stores, so that I was speedily rigged anew from head to foot; and not that alone, but rugs and blankets and provisions were brought and packed; each of these dark Samaritans vying with each other in being of service. And as at dawn the long train moved off, headed by the big bull whose curiosity had been the cause of my rescue—angry still, with much throaty gurgling and grinding of teeth—the chief, before mounting his riding camel, shook me by the hand and put into it two one-pound notes, listening the while silently to my heartfelt thanks. Then said he, speaking very slowly, but in good English:

'Fare thee well, my brother! Evilly hast thou been entreated. Maybe in days to come thou shalt meet thine enemy and repay him with usury the ill he hath worked upon thee. Then—what saith thine own Scripture—eye for eye, tooth for tooth? And as for thanks, thou owest me none. "Succour the afflicted and distressed, whether by reason of hunger or by reason of thirst or of wounds; those that fall into the hands of robbers and are left empty by the wayside, the poor and the friendless. So shall it be with thee hereafter." Thus commandeth our Prophet. In his name—the name of Allah the All-Merciful—fare thee well!'

And so saying, that Christian and gentleman—as I understand the meaning of these words—swung on to his camel and made off after his people, leaving me full of gratitude and wonder for such charity as assuredly few, if any, of my own colour would have shown me.

Feeling still sore and weak, I walked up to the site of our old camp, where a big heap of stuff yet smouldered amongst the poles and boughs of the dining-place. In it I recognised portions of my tent and blankets; also the shaft-rope, burnt nearly to tinder. With gratuitous cruelty and meanness, Ormon had evidently thrown all my little possessions on the fire—the pocket-book containing the few treasured home-letters and photographs; the tin case with certificates and discharges; comb and brush, towels, &c. And I swore as I poked about the pile that, if ever I got the chance, I would not forget my friend Shahbaz Khan's injunction respecting repayment with usury.

On the spot where my tent had been pitched I found, however, a small folding looking-glass and a copy of *Monte Christo* that had been amongst my belongings. Opening the former, I started back in dismay at what I saw. The peaked beard I wore was flecked with white spots here and there, whilst one side of my moustache was altogether white, the other gray; and dabs of white showed on my thick black hair like patches of paint. It was long before

I mustered courage to look again; and I really believe that this wound to my vanity touched me more nearly than the murderous treachery of my mate and the loss of the gold. You see, I was young, and generally thought good-looking; and to suddenly know myself disfigured—spotted like a native cat—gave me a sore shock. Perhaps this matter accounted partly for the compassionate gaze I had noticed in the dark eyes of my friends, the camel-people yonder; for no man seeing me but might well guess that the bleaching had been sudden and recent, inasmuch as no person in his senses would grow hair in such piebald fashion on lip and chin. Without a doubt, now must I go clean shaven for the rest of my days—a prospect that was far from pleasing to me. But now to find the author of all this misfortune, or at least to raise the hue-and-cry after him over the whole of Northern Queensland! So, stiff and sore though I was, I set forth on my sixty-mile tramp to Jubilee, the nearest township. But, what with new boots, cut feet, and the heat and reaction consequent on my mad fit in the shaft, I made but a very poor stage that day; nor, unaccustomed to walking, did I do much better on the next one. And it was quite a week before I entered Jubilee. Here my first proceeding was to report in full to the police, of whom there were a sergeant, three troopers, and a black tracker. Then I bought a razor, and nearly cut my throat during my first essay at shaving.

The police were confident of soon laying their hands on Ormon; and they scoured the country far and wide, besides setting the wires to work wherever possible. But a fortnight passed and no news could be heard of him.

'He's gone out back,' said the sergeant; 'right away across into the Territory. But I've sent word to the S.A. police, and they're all on the watch for the beggar. You'll see him swing yet, my lad, if you'll only have a little patience.'

All very fine; but my money was done, and I must get work or starve—there being no Shahbaz Khans amongst the Jubilees that I could see. So I started off for the coast, stone-broke, but hopeful of finding a job somewhere on the road. But it seemed that Amos Ormon had taken all my luck as well as my gold with him. Always I was just too late or a considerable time too soon. And everywhere, as I passed, I made vain inquiries respecting a stout, red-headed, fair-moustached man, with three or four horses. Nobody had heard of or seen him; and it was almost as if the earth had swallowed him the day he rode away from the burning camp on Wild Horse Creek. Everywhere, to those of the police who had not already received particulars—and they were few and far between, at isolated outposts—I told my story. Thus, swagging along from station to station, township to township, I had at least the poor

satisfaction of knowing, when I finally reached the sea at Cardwell, that I had made Queensland too hot to hold any ordinary man answering to the description of my late mate. In my own mind, however, I was pretty well convinced that, long ere this, he was in one of the southern colonies, if not out of the country altogether. A most excellent bushman, with four horses, all good of their kind, arms, ammunition, and money, he could, in that lost week, have crossed by back tracks and unobserved to any point of the compass he wished. He neither drank nor gambled; also I knew, from stray words let fall in his less dour moments, that he was a man who, like many professional miners, had travelled far and wide in the practice of his calling, deeming no spot too distant, no hardship too great, when once the magic voice of gold reached him across seas and deserts, fever-stricken lands, and hostile tribes. And still, in spite of all, I thought we might yet meet again. Meanwhile the first fierce desire of vengeance had calmed down to a steady glow, burning always brightly and enduringly, but yet not absorbing my mind to the exclusion of aught else.

And ever as the years went by in varying fortune, mostly poor, some sudden turn or look about a man passed in a crowd, the sight of a red shock of hair, the sound of a deep, slow-speaking voice, now and again enabled me to feel in quickening pulse and thickened breath that if ever the moment of reckoning arrived the payment would be heavy, the creditor pitiless.

CHAPTER IV.

MR SINCLAIR AND HIS SERVANT.



AS I said before, since the day, now seven years ago, that my mate had left me to die at the bottom of the shaft on Wild Horse Creek, Fortune had been far from kind to me. For a time I had followed the sea; then, leaving it, I went on to the diggings again—west to Coolgardie, outside to New Guinea and Sud Est; but never more than making a living, and not too good a one at that.

And at last, stranded in Brisbane, I had shipped as quartermaster on a small London barque called the *Ulundi* that had put in for some repairs on a passage from Foo-Chow to Melbourne, with tea. From the latter we went to Colombo, thence to Port Elizabeth in South Africa, taking a cargo of coffee; loaded wool at the port; and had now come round to Capetown to fill up for home. As we lay in the bay, under the shadow of the mighty rock, our topsails loose, and cable up-and-down, the captain was growling to the mate about the non-appearance of a passenger.

'Why the deuce,' the old man was saying, 'can't he go home, like any other decent body, in one of the mail-boats! I hate passengers—specially in a ship that ain't meant for 'em. He's bringin' his servant, too, the agents tell me—as big a swell as his master, I suppose.'

'Ay,' replied the mate, taking his cue; 'and the saloon's chock-a-bloek with luggage, and the lazarette with private stores—cases o' wine and provisions till further orders. Must be well in, whoever he is. Do you know anything about him, sir?'

'Party the name o' Sinclair,' replied the captain testily. 'One o' those gold and diamond fellows, like Brown and Healy and that lot. Gammons he wants a long sea-trip for his health. One comfort—the agents made him pay through the nose. I'd take his passage-money cheorfully for two years' wages.'

As he finished speaking a small steam-launch left the shore and was soon alongside. There were only two men in her, and as they came up the gangway I had a good view of them. The first was a stout, portly, clean-shaven, dark-haired customer, dressed all in white, wearing a diamond ring on his finger and diamond studs in the stiff shirt that ran into the blue silk cummerbund around his waist; tanned shoes, cut low, showing red silk socks, Panama hat, and a big cigar completed the outfit. The other carried a port-manteau, and was a youngish-looking Malay—evidently the servant.

'Stinkin' nigger!' muttered the skipper, sighting the latter, as he walked to the break of the poop and bawled, 'Heave away there, for'ard! Sheet home as soon's the anchor's off the bottom. Steward, show Mr Sinclair to his berth.'

Meanwhile the latter leaned against the quarter-deck capstan, puffing at his cigar, and shaking his hands—which had become soiled by the man-ropes—as a cat does wet paws. But now the steward advanced, all deferential smiles and inquiries, as befitted one with handsome tips in view, and the three left the deck as I went to the wheel; whilst under jib and staysail the ship's head fell off, topsails were sheeted home, fore and main tacks boarded, and sheets brought aft, and the *Ulundi*, with the wind no more than free, stood out of Table Bay into the great Atlantic.

Very few vessels of the *Ulundi's* size can afford to carry quartermasters. But then, very few vessels steered as atrociously as she did. Time after time her owners had attempted to remedy the defect, but to no purpose. Whether, amongst a dozen other assigned causes, there was something wrong with her lines; whether the foremast was too far for'ard, or the mizzen too far aft, mattered little; the fact remained that she steered like a driven turkey after sundown. In heavy wintry weather off the Horn it took two men sweating in their shirt-sleeves to keep her within a handful of

points each way. In light and moderate winds she was all her time trying to slip off or up in the most aggravating fashion. No matter how closely you watched her, she'd best you sooner or later. Going along quiet and steady at half-a-spoke or so each way, you'd think that at last you'd found out her soft side and could afford to let your eye leave the card for a moment. Then all at once you'd feel her swing away from under you as her head fell off three or four points or came rushing up into the wind; and then the fun was only beginning. Gentle helm she took no more notice of than a bolting horse with the bit broken. Hard up, hard down, and her head spinning as if on a swivel in wild dartings to one side and the other for five and ten minutes, was the rule before she could be induced to come to her course again. The officers swore, and so did the helmsman; but, unless new to the vessel, the former never volunteered an exhibition of their steering. There are few things at sea more perilous or heart-breaking than a thoroughly bad-steering ship. Thus the *Ulundi* seldom kept her company, fore or aft, two successive voyages.

Naturally, being at the wheel so much, I saw a good deal of Mr Sinclair. For hours he would lie in his deck-chair alongside the binnacle, sometimes reading a trashy 'yellow-back,' but oftener pondering, with brooding, light-blue eyes fixed on vacancy, and a long, thin-lipped line of mouth tight shut. Early in the passage he and the captain had concluded not to suit each other, and now seldom spoke. To the officers a curt nod was his only greeting. He smoked incessantly the most expensive cigars, but I never saw him offer anybody one. Waited upon hand and foot by his Malay, Ali, his slightest wish seemed to be forestalled, his least want understood.

Of course, the *Ulundi* being the daisy she was to steer, I had little time to study faces, or anything else besides my helm. Still, as day after day that wrinkled, naked, impassive countenance met my eye, there seemed a curious, uncomfortable familiarity in it that grew upon and puzzled me mightily, in addition to spoiling my steering as much as was possible. Thus, being pre-occupied, and letting the barque go off on her capers much more than usual, I one day, for almost the only time, lost all control over her. Mr Sinclair, as he watched the wheel and the ship's head alternately, seemed interested in the play, and stared hard at me as I swore under my breath, whilst the skipper stood grimly and silently by, until, after an exciting ten minutes, I brought the beast to her course again. Then, turning to me, the old man remarked sorrowfully, 'Well, Davies, it's the first time I ever knew her to get away so badly with you.'

At the mention of my name I saw our passenger start slightly and give me a steady, searching glance from his cold blue eyes as he half-rose from the chair that, taken up with the struggle between ship and helm, he had turned round

facing the wheel. As I met his gaze a strange notion took hold on me; and over those thin, cruel lips I drew, in my mind's eye, a heavy curve of flaxen moustache; in lieu of the black hair I placed a coarse, red shock; took furrows out of the forehead, seams out of the full cheeks, crow's-feet away from the temples, and Ormon the Gulfer stood before me. The next moment I laughed the idea to scorn as I watched him lie back in his chair and motion to Ali to come with cigars and soda and whisky. To my astonishment, as the Malay mixed the drink, his master pointed to me, saying in his deep voice, 'Take it, quartermaster. It'll do you good after that tussle. She's as bad to hold as a buckin' brunny.'

As he spoke an undefinable something in the manner and tone of him, no less than the bush allusion, thrilled me through and through, making suspicion leap hot to my heart again as I waved the proffered glass aside and bent eyes I felt growing fierce and eager upon the compass.

'Against the rules, eh?' said Mr Sinclair indifferently, as the mate explained. 'Oh, all right. Only it's such a picnic steerin' this bitch of a ship that I thought you might make an allowance.'

The mate—a quiet, elderly man—frowned and moved away without reply; whilst, my relief appearing, I gave up the wheel and went forward for a think and a smoke.

But I could come to no solid conclusion except that a fancied resemblance might, if I was not careful, get me into trouble. Still, with it all, there was a persistent, haunting feeling at my heart that my quest was ended, my quarry marked down; and, to strengthen this almost certainty, I noticed, to my secret joy, that, when my wheel came round again, Sinclair, whilst pretending to be absorbed in a book, was furtively studying me, feature by feature. I managed, however, to look as stolidly unconcerned as any other man might have done; nor did the doubting frown escape me with which he at last finished his scrutiny and turned to his reading in earnest. Something, I supposed, in voice or feature—called up by the name, perhaps—must have struck him for a moment as familiar. His doubts, however, were, I fancied, only partially set at rest. Still, it would have been strange if in the gaunt, brown-faced, middle-aged man, with hair almost white, he should have recognised anything of the bearded, fresh-coloured, new-chum sailor he had robbed and left to die so miserably in the Australian bush. Nor could he have been expecting any resurrection of the kind; and here I, of course, held the advantage over him, being ever on the watch. Nor did I trouble my mind as to his motives in disguising himself—if such had really been his idea. Men, especially as they grow older, often shave clean; and as for the hair, when I remembered how Ormon the

Gulfer used to dress it, and soap it, and endeavour vainly to darken and force it into some kind of shape, I was not surprised that when able to afford a wig he should have done so. And, indeed, as a matter of fact, he was now a far better-looking man than he had been seven years ago, to say nothing of the added consequence given to his bearing by the wealth that he evidently possessed. Still, could that glossy, black headpiece, consorting none too well with the light brows and pale-blue eyes, be a wig? By no stretch of imagination, however, could I conceive of that flaming, turbulent, crimson shock submitting to any dye, no matter how powerful. However, I thought I should soon be able finally to solve that puzzle. Meanwhile a fact accidentally came to my knowledge that helped not a little towards converting belief into stubborn certainty.

Being at the wheel one night when the second mate was relieving the chief, and the former appearing almost before the bell had ceased striking, the mate remarked jokingly, 'Now, that's the smartest relief I believe I ever had! What's the matter? Killed anybody in your time, and can't sleep for thinking about it, eh?'

'No; but I believe that infernal passenger's conscience is troubling him. The beggar's grinding his teeth all night long,' replied the second mate wrathfully. 'I never heard such a row in my life. I'm going to ask the old man to let me change into another berth. Ugh! You listen to him as you go by. It's just like a fellow chewing gravel.'

And as he spoke I seemed myself to hear the horrible grating noise again, as many a night I had heard it proceeding from the tent on the banks of Wild Horse Creek. The very next day I was present at an altercation between the steward and Ali.

'Allus water, water, water he's a-wantin', quartermaster,' said the former, appealing to me. 'Sez his boss can't do without lots o' water. Well, all I knows is, I've been w' passengers afore this—swells an' toffs among 'em, too; but I've never seed 'em forced to wash their 'ead an' 'ands an' face a dozen times a day, to say nothin' o' baths without number. Why, the condenser's kep' ago'in' for nothin' else.'

Here was another trait retained by the Amos Ormon I remembered. Still, there were probably more people than one in the world who ground their teeth in sleep and cultivated an inordinate fancy for washing themselves.

Ali was Capetown bred and born, and had, I found, been not long in his present employ. He was a smart young fellow of about twenty, and particularly expert at grooming his master, an operation that took up a good deal of his time through the day. For me, as it happened, he had a particular regard, because more than once at the beginning of the passage I had

interfered—remembering my obligations to men of colour—between him and certain of the crew who, after the manner of their kind, thought that anything black was made to be knocked about. Thus Ali was grateful, and would, I thought, answer a simple question I meant presently to put to him.

During the day all hands had been busy scraping paint off the front of the poop, and giving it a priming coat of red, preliminary to a final dressing of white.

And when, as, in the first dog-watch, I sat smoking on the after-hatchway, and Ali came hurrying past bearing a great can of hot water, I stopped him and abruptly said, 'Ali, what's the colour of the boss's head when his wig's off?' he first gasped in surprise, then showed all his white teeth in an appreciative grin, and silently pointed to the paint glowing with a fine flare of red in the sun. I was thoroughly satisfied.

CHAPTER V.

THE WRECK OF THE 'ULUNDI.'



ALL this time the *Ulundi* had been making more or less erratic headway, mostly with light south-east winds, until she got well over towards the South American coast.

Apart from the steering trouble, she was a good little ship enough to be in; officers and crew worked well together, and the provisions were above the average. Perhaps out of the whole ship's company I was the only really unhappy man, pondering as I did night and day on some means of paying Amos Ormion what I owed him, and seeing no chance.

I don't think I wanted to kill him; but I certainly did want to get a bit level—make him feel something of the pain and agony he had caused me, and—yes, decidedly—force him to disgorge my seven hundred pounds, with liberal interest added.

But for all the prospect I could see of doing anything of the kind, I might as well never have discovered him. All day long, with intervals for meals and groomings, he would lie in his chair thinking, reading, and speaking to no one but Ali. Such an unsocial customer had he proved himself, together with a tendency to insult coarsely both captain and officers, that they had practically sent him to Coventry—rather, it would seem, to his satisfaction. He smoked incessantly; drank a good deal of light wine, but never sufficient to be overcome by it; and at times, leaving his chair, he would pace the deck for an hour or two, pausing now and again to thoughtfully finger his upper lip, as I had on many an occasion seen him do in camp

when a moustache grew there. And often, watching him, I noted several little familiar mannerisms that, had I needed additional proof, would have been of value. But I was long ago satisfied. Once or twice I fancied, when his eyes met mine, that I detected something like speculation in their cold, shallow depths, as of one struggling with some half-formed, elusive memory of feature that perhaps, as I had thought before, the similar name and avocation of his victim had called into existence. In vain I racked my brains for some feasible project that should bring us face to face and alone, with no one to interfere when the row began. I could think of nothing. And then Providence took a hand in the game.

In making this remark it must be understood that I mean nothing irreverent. I am getting an old man now, and doubtless some of the loose sailor speech of earlier days still hangs about me—at least, so the friends and relations who found me out when my luck turned are always telling me; but so far as His name is concerned I have in my wildest talk been more careful than most seamen.

In about twenty degrees south, then, one day it came on to blow heavily from the south-west, with a sea gradually getting up of a size one might expect perhaps off the Cape or across the Southern Ocean, but hardly in the Trades, or what ought to have been the Trades. Presently, with an ever-falling glass, the wind hauled astern, and, under a couple of lower topsails and a foresail, her captain ran the *Ulundi* before it when she ought to have been hove to. But he had left that too late, and was now frightened to attempt it. So, with two men at the wheel, bareheaded, the sweat raining off them, and every muscle strained to the thrusting spokes, the barque raged along, nosing wildly a couple and three points to each side of her course, and kept at that only by dint of downright hard bullocking.

Early in the afternoon the gale increased almost to a hurricane, and it became evident that the foresail would have to come off, keeping her bows down as it was, and doing far more harm than good. It was a big sail, and for a long time all hands fought at it without avail. Even the cook and the steward had volunteered and were on the yard. One minute, watching from the weather helm where I stood, it would appear to be conquered; then, all of a sudden, the great breadths of hard, wet canvas would thunder out from under the men's grasping fingers and shake the barque in every timber of her. Nor did we dare to luff and touch her up, and thus spill the sail, or keep away, as one might do in a decent-steering ship. Give the *Ulundi* a point, and one never knew when she'd stop; and with such a sea as rolled its mountainous crests astern of us, all our efforts went to keep her stern to it.

Close to the wheel, anxiously glancing now at the compass, now at the great spar dotted thick with clawing, straining bodies, stood the captain and the mate. The second mate was already aloft. Of Sinclair nothing was to be seen; but, poking above the half-closed hood of the companion, I caught a glimpse of Ali's face quite green with fear. And still the foresail flapped and thundered, whilst the *Ulundi* shot up one big comber and rushed down another all a-smother with foam and water up to the coamings of her latches, and lying over so heavily at times as to dip her port foreyard-arm.

'They want more beef up there!' shouted the captain suddenly. 'Quartermaster, you and Hendricks had better run along and give 'em a hand, or that cursed sail 'll never come in;' and so saying, he stepped to the weather side of the wheel, whilst the mate gripped the lee spokes.

Hendricks—an ordinary seaman picked up at Capetown, and my lee helmsman—ran forward, very glad to get away, for the sight of those roaring walls of water towering over his head had been making him sick with fear, and during the last hour his eyes had been constantly turned over his shoulder.

If I could help doing so I never went aloft in oilskins; thus, as I clawed along the weather deck, I paused for a minute in front of the house that we quartermasters shared with the carpenter and the sailmaker, to take off coat and overalls and throw them inside. Hendricks was already in the fore-rigging. Suddenly I heard a terrible cry, and, looking up through the blinding spray and foam that arched over the ship from windward, I saw a most shocking sight. Once more the foresail had escaped and was thundering and bellying with cannon-like explosions from a yard that tossed crazily to and fro, held only by the lifts and braces. The great iron truss, or crane securing it to the mast had carried away; and even as I stared the big sail and its yard swung round to the wind, lifts and braces snapped like threads under the tremendous pressure, and the next moment the spar and its human freight were blown away like an insect-covered twig into the seething cauldron to leeward.

Probably the yard snapped the forestay; for, whilst I gazed, there was a dreadful crashing of timber, as the foremast with all its spars and yards fell fair over the fore-castle-head in one great heap of ruin. Instinctively turning aft, as I felt the ship stop almost dead, I saw a huge black-green water-mountain hanging over the stern, and under its shadow the captain and the mate, still at the wheel, with their faces turned back and upwards as if fascinated. Then, just as the avalanche descended, I bolted into the little house, closed the door, and throwing myself into a lower bunk, clung to the stanchions

with might and main. Another second, and I heard the thunder of the great comber aft, mingled with the crashing of more spars; then, with a burst, the water was upon me, and I was choking and stifling under, it seemed, tons of it. Thinking I must be overboard, I let go my grip, rose, and grabbing something else, presently found my head clear, and that I was hanging on to one of the iron girders forming the framework of the house roof. The water had made a clean sweep right through it, in at one end, out at the other; and as I drew myself up, panting and exhausted, I saw that the *Ulundi* was a hulk. Main and mizzen masts had snapped off just below top and topmast cross-trees respectively, and gone clear of the hull. Big seas broke inboard amidships and forward, for she had slewed round to the wind, and her after-part was comparatively clear of water. Clinging as I was to the iron frame of the roof, my situation was precarious, and, watching my chance, I dropped down and crawled aft amongst an indescribable mess of gear and ship's furniture, which, washing about fiercely, gave me no end of trouble to get through. The poop ladders were gone, of course, but I managed to clamber up there without them. To my surprise, I found the skylight and companion intact; but wheel, binnacle, boats, and all else were swept away, the davits of the latter being twisted like corkscrews. The port mizzen rigging lay across the deck; but the shrouds had gone in the eyes on each side of the mast-head and let all the spars float clear off. The same thing, apparently, had happened at the main, for the big barrel of it stood up naked to the splintered summit, whilst its rigging swam in long black trails empty to leeward. To my delight, I saw that the gale had blown itself out, for the lowering sun was trying to peer through ragged drifts of wreck, and eyes of blue dotted the sky here and there. The wreck, too, rode high; and, though a big sea still ran, I fancied she was tight. Forward there was a tremendous raffle of spars and gear now washing along on each bow, but I could hear no bumping.

So occupied had my mind been with the dreadful catastrophe and the suddenness of it that I had completely forgotten all about Sinclair and Ali. Indeed, I had taken it for granted that I was the sole survivor on the *Ulundi*. But now I recollected that the others were probably below, and that if they had stayed there they might still be alive. Finding the hood of the companion jammed, I was forced to get on to the quarterdeck before I could enter the saloon.

The ship had a heavy list, making me think some of her dead-weight below had shifted. The light was dim as I stepped over the wash-boards, up to my knees in water, and groped my way carefully along, holding on to the table, and with all sorts of stuff washing against my

legs in response to the sharp, jerky motion of the hull.

Seeing that the decanters were still in the swinging tray, I took a long drink out of the first one to hand. It proved to be brandy, and did me good. Then I shouted aloud; but, save the creaking and complaining of the barque's timbers that filled the whole place, I could hear nothing. Suddenly, as she gave a heavy lurch, some soft object washed up from leeward and was blocked against me by the backward roll. Stooping, I caught hold of it, and up popped poor Ali's black face—a nasty sight. But the spirit had put heart into me, and I made shift to drag the body on to the table, the head, meanwhile, lolling unnaturally, as if hung on hinges—a thing that made me sure the neck was broken. Had his master met a similar fate? I wondered, as I looked anxiously about me. But the dusk had come; and, for all I could see, there might be another body washing about to leeward or stuck amongst the furniture. So, making back to the pantry, I got a box of matches, and after a lot of trouble lit the big lamp that hung from the deck over the saloon table. Then, seeing nothing, I tried the door of the berth I knew to be Sinclair's. But it would not open, feeling not as if locked, but rather as if some heavy mass were against it. In the pantry I had noticed a nearly new tomahawk used by the steward for opening cases. Getting this, I attacked the upper panels of the door, and soon had a hole big enough to put my head in. It was too dark, however, to make out anything. But imagining I heard a groan, I went to work again, and after a while had a space chopped down right to the obstruction, that I now felt to be a great, heavy chest, which, fetching 'way, had effectually blocked the door from the inside. By the light of the saloon lamp I could see, as I stepped through the breach on to the box, a spacious, well-furnished cabin, with, right in front of me, an empty swinging-cot; a handsome wardrobe stood along one side, its doors wide open, displaying much clothing that shaped out fantastically to the list of the ship. As I stared around, a groan, apparently under my feet, made me jump. It was dark just there, and striking one of my long wax-vestas and looking down, I beheld a ghastly face glaring full at me out of senseless eyes whose whites, showing horribly, sent my memory flashing away to the fixed regard of the crows on the windlass barrel at Wild Horse Creek, what time they gloated over me in anticipation. The body lay on its back, with both legs jammed between the big chest and the door. The head, I saw, as I gazed till the match burned my fingers, was covered with a crop of vivid red hair cut close to the skull, whilst along the upper lip grew a curve of white bristles—testimony to the lack of Ali's razor. All the colour had gone from the face, leaving it pallid and

shrunk, and for a minute I thought the man was dead. But as I struck another match and lit the cabin lamp he groaned and beat his one free hand on the floor; the other hand and arm seemed doubled up beneath him. There, then, at last, was my enemy, brought to book through no effort of mine, and apparently in a very sorry plight. And, strange to say, as I stood there and looked down at him, crippled, helpless, almost dead, all that desire of vengeance nursed so carefully through the years vanished, leaving in its stead merely a weak sensation of pity. This struck me as curious and disappointing. But without pausing to analyse my emotions, I threw all my strength into the endeavour to pull the chest away from the sufferer's legs. I might as well have tried to move the ship. In vain I tugged and pulled; the thing never budged an inch. Resting after one of these attempts, I was startled by a voice saying, 'You'll never do it, Frank, without a lever.'

Looking round, I saw that life had come into Ormon's eyes and a little colour into his face; saw also that he knew me for his old mate.

'Both my legs are broken, I think,' he went on presently. 'I was trying to get out when I heard the row on deck, and that cursed box broke its lashings and pinned me here. Where's Ali? And what's happened?'

As I lifted his head and gave him to drink of brandy and water, I answered him briefly, and then made my way on deck for something to help me to move the chest. Both wind and sea, I found, had gone down a lot. The night was clear, with stars; and as I threw a swift glance round the horizon, my eye caught the loom of a dark mass on the port quarter that looked uncommonly like land. But I was in a hurry; and luckily coming across one of the long handspikes that used to stand in a rack around the mizzenmast, I returned, and by aid of it and strenuous effort, at last prised the box away sufficiently to allow of my drawing Ormon from between it and the door, shocked to perceive as I did so that not only were splintered bones projecting through the skin just above one knee, but that the other leg also seemed terribly injured. He fainted as I pulled the mattress out of the cot and got him on it the best way I could. Some more brandy revived him; but he was evidently suffering intense agony. Still, he insisted on my telling him how I had escaped from the shaft. And then, in words broken by gasps of pain, he said:

'I've had nothin' but good luck since. Don't think I'm sorry, because I ain't. It was my chance, and I took it. I'd do the same again to-morrow if it had to be done. Didn't I tell you I'd make better use o' the money than you could? I'm worth twenty thousand pounds to-day. Hard lines, though—ain't it?—gettin' jammed by that infernal chest. It's only quartz specimens from different claims I'm interested

in, and that I was taking home to float a few companies with. I told the fools to stow it in the hold, and they put it here instead. I knowed you some time ago; at least I had a good notion it was you, and of late was almost certain of it. Cursed if I don't think I'm goin' to croak this trip! I can feel cold creepin' up me inside. Put your hand under my shirt and take out what you find there.'

Obeying him, I drew forth a small bag of wash-leather fastened to a gold chain he wore around his neck. It seemed to the touch full of different-sized pebbles.

'There's between ten and twelve thousand pounds' worth o' diamonds there,' he said faintly. 'Take 'em; they're yours. And they're honestly come by. Now open that desk and you'll find pen and ink and paper. Write that I, William Sinclair, of Johannesburg and Kimberley, leave you, Frank Davies, all shares, stock, and mining scrip, &c., that I'm possessed of. You might as well have it as any one else. Now let me try and sign it.' And by a great effort he guided the pen along the letters of his name, and then fell back in another faint.

The motion of the vessel was now much easier, owing not only to the sea having gone down, but because most of the forward wreckage had cleared itself, and thus allowed the bows to rise and fall freely. But still she rolled heavily enough to send the water and *débris* splashing up from leeward almost into the berth; and from where I sat wiping the cold sweat off the dying man's forehead I could see through the hacked and battered door dead Ali moving restlessly on the table under the lamp-light.

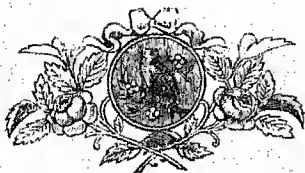
Suddenly Ormon opened his eyes and ceased his stertorous breathing. Looking fixedly at me, he grinned and said slowly, 'Well, after all,

I'm glad you got out o' that hole. Such a chump as you was, to be sure! And what wouldn't you do to me when you caught me, eh? And now you've got me proper—and I've *made* you! You'll be all right,' he continued faintly, as a tremor convulsed his limbs; 'I can hear 'em comin' now.' Raising his hand to his head, he felt the coarse bristly hair with a petulant frown on his face; and I turned to get the black wig I had noticed in an open case. But when I looked again the eyes were fixed and staring, the jaw fallen, the end arrived.

Even as I covered his face I heard the sound of voices hailing, and, going on deck, found that the dawn had broken, and that close alongside lay a small steamer; whilst not two miles away was a thickly-wooded island, with high up its sides a cluster of white houses.

This turned out to be Fernando Noronha, the penal settlement of Brazil; and the steamer was the one that brought the convicts and soldiers their monthly supplies from the mainland.

The *Santa Anna* towed the *Ulundi* into Pernambuco, whence, taking passage to London, I soon discovered that Ormon's estimate as to the value of the diamonds was, if anything, under the mark. Realising on them, I proceeded to the Cape, and there also found that Mr William Sinclair's name was well known as a lucky mining speculator on the Rand, where, although not a popular man, he was looked upon as a fair and capable one. And his investments were all genuine, solid, and realisable. Thus, after all, it will be seen that my mate atoned fully enough, after a fashion, for the theft of my luck and my gold, and without any necessity on my part for application of the *lex talionis*, as laid down by my good friend Shahbaz Khan—may his shadow never grow less!



THE SILVER JOSS.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

CHAPTER I.

UNTIL about five years ago the silver joss had occupied a conspicuous, if not exactly an honoured, position in the hall of Quarrendon Manor. It was, of course, an ugly thing, and therefore much esteemed as a curio. Besides, it had a history. It was distinctly an antique. A London merchant in antiquities, who had once seen it at Quarrendon, had tried hard to buy it. Old Jeth Anjou, the master of Quarrendon, would have sold it to him like a shot if it had been his to sell. But it belonged to Hilary, his nephew, after having belonged to Hilary's father, who had been a lieutenant on the *Ramrod* during the sack of the Summer Palace at Peking in 1860; and Hilary had a profound regard for the mass of bullion. The young man was only waiting, he used to say, until he could afford to pay the cost of its transport to his chambers in the Middle Temple. He seemed likely to wait a long time, for now, at the end of five years, he had made not a single step of importance towards the Woolsack, or even, indeed, towards a valuable acquaintance with metropolitan solicitors.

Meanwhile 'the idol' (as the Quarrendon maids termed it) had been removed from the Manor hall to Mr Hilary's own room. This had been done partly as a precaution by Hilary himself, and partly because, really, Jeth Anjou's scowls at the precious antique, whenever he passed it, seemed calculated in time to develop into mania of a more aggressive kind.

The joss's modern history may be sketched in few words. The lieutenant had chanced to be confined to his ship on that memorable day when the available force on board the *Ramrod* was mustered to join in the burning and loot of the palace of the 'Lord of Heaven and Earth.' It was, as he growled repeatedly in his fever, a 'ghastly nuisance.' There was no knowing what luck was in store for his brother-officers. And he paid small heed to Jim Tarver's humble assurances that whatever he got should be Master Hilary's, if Master Hilary would do him the kindness to let it be so. Jim Tarver was one of the marines on board the *Ramrod*, and he hailed from Quarrendon, where his father had employment on the Anjou estate. But

Lieutenant Anjou quite lost his momentary petulance when the others returned and showed him their treasures. These were of a most fascinating kind—sumptuous silk garments; ivories carved into the semblance of lace; idols of jade and a variety of other materials, including silver; china of enchanting tints; as well as jewellery, quaint pseudo-scientific instruments, and much else. Hilary's brother-officers were good fellows, and would not be satisfied except by a division of their spoil with him and the other unfortunates who had been held to the *Ramrod* by duty's call. This was delightful. But to Jim Tarver it did not seem enough.

Jim Tarver had with great greed pounced upon the silver joss in a bizarre and beautiful little temple of the palace. It had been neglected, though with regret, by the French and certain British tars, who had already inspected it, kicked it, tried to carry it off, and abandoned it for treasures of a more portable kind. It seemed to most of the men that they could do a deal better than burden themselves with this uneouth lump of stuff, which might not be silver after all. But so did it not seem to Jim Tarver. The instant he saw its squat form, he said to himself that it was the very thing to rejoice the lieutenant's heart; and so he put a rope round its short, thick neck, and passed the other end of the rope round his own waist. The joss weighed nearly a hundred-weight. Hence Jim soon wearied of lugging it; he scarcely knew whither, and so he just sat down on its head and chewed tobacco until some of his mates came his way on their return to the ship. The four hours were nearly up. These worthy comrades, though their hands and pockets seemed choked with good things, yielded to Jim's entreaties; and between them they dragged the joss in most humiliating mode towards one of the *Ramrod's* boats. It was the proudest moment of Jim's life when he hailed the lieutenant on deck and bade him gaze upon the idol.

'It's for you, sir, axin' your pardon,' he said.

Young Hilary accepted the gift. To be sure, he gave Jim a five-pound note for it, much against the seaman's will. But it was obviously worth more than that at a time when silver was so much less common than it is now.

Honest Jim Tarver never saw Quarrendon again. They had to drop him over into the Yellow Sea shortly after his adventure with the idol. But when the lieutenant revisited his home he took the joss with him, and at Quarrendon it had stayed ever since. In 1863 he married. That, his elder brother Jeth said, was a piece of monstrous imprudence, considering that he had little but his pay to live upon. Jeth had about £3000 a year in land, being the eldest son. The imprudence of marrying on these conditions was, however, as nothing to the calamity of his and his young wife's sudden death two years later. That was how Jeth found himself saddled with Hilary the babe, plus the silver joss. The residue of the lieutenant's estate went to pay debts, funeral expenses, and the like.

To do him justice, Jeth Anjon, though a prodigious grumbler, was not a man to shirk a duty. Quite the contrary, indeed. He was in some respects a martyr to his conscience. It was his conscience, for instance, strengthened by a sense of family pride, that made him care for young Hilary, his nephew, as he would have cared for his own son, if he had ever married and begotten an heir. The boy went to Winchester and New College; and afterwards, having studied a little, was called to the Bar. The eminent counsel who subsequently accepted a hundred guineas that Hilary might, if he pleased, profit by his advice and society, did not pretend to be enthusiastic about his pupil's abilities. Events seemed to prove that the eminent counsel was prudent in his reticence. Jeth Anjon of Quarrendon grumbled abominably at all this. Nevertheless, he paid Hilary his allowance of £300 per annum just the same. But he cursed the silver joss more and more whenever his steps led him into the temple of fishing-rods, double-barrelled guns, boxing-gloves, and golf-clubs, in which it was now enshrined.

Quite lately old Jeth's moods had become very sulky indeed. His man could make nothing of them, and the maids expressed their fear of him.

The fact was that the master of Quarrendon was suffering greatly from that all-too-common epidemic, agricultural depression. As if that was not enough, he had been lured into speculation, with the result that in nine cases out of ten comes to vex the speculator. The two complaints together had brought him well within sight of ruin, and that was why he had written an imperative letter to young Hilary in town, summoning him to Quarrendon.

The barrister had just arrived, brown and spruce and hearty; the picture of a man in excellent health, in the prime of life, and without any worry of consequence enough to disturb either his digestion, his sleep, or his heart's action.

Old Jeth was lean and yellow, wrinkled beyond his sixty odd years, and with the look of a hunted deer in his eyes.

'Well, uncle,' said Hilary gaily, 'it's always a pleasure to me to run down, but I can't say I liked the tone of insistence in your letter. I hope to goodness nothing is the matter.'

Jeth pushed out his lips and lifted his brows. 'There's nothing that isn't wrong,' he said sharply. 'You've got to stand on your own feet henceforth.'

'You mean'—and the barrister's face now certainly showed some alarm—'that you have had money losses?'

'Read that letter,' said Jeth.

It was a simple notification from some people in Throgmorton Street that the fortnightly account of Jeth Anjon, Esq., showed a balance on the wrong side of £2941, 14s. 11d., and that they would be glad of his cheque for the amount.

Hilary whistled. But he quickly recovered his presence of mind.

'I say, I never thought *you* would have been roped in like that. Still, it isn't so *very* much.'

'It's been going on for three months,' exclaimed old Jeth, almost with a shout. He resented the need thus to explain matters to his nephew, who was dependent upon him, but he meant to go through with it, cost his spirit what it might.

'For three months?'

'And nearly always the same. I'm an old fool; it's as plain as the thumb on my hand. I'll save you the trouble of saying so. I had to tell you, and I've told you. Quarrendon must come to the hammer, and there's an end of it—and me. And now just get upstairs and dress for dinner, will you?'

'Oh, bother dinner!—let that wait a bit,' retorted Hilary.

'I will *not* wait for dinner,' cried old Jeth, thumping his hand on the Throgmorton Street letter.

Now Hilary, though something of a butterfly, was not utterly spoilt by London life on an allowance. He realised his and his uncle's position in its entirety. For himself this reverse was bad, distinctly; but for his uncle it was very much worse. Hilary was touched by the sudden recollection of all this soured, disillusioned old man had done for him. This very step that had brought him to ruin had, like enough, been taken on his behalf, as the family representative for the next generation.

'Dear old uncle,' he said quietly, as he put his arm round Jeth's neck, 'let us feed first; I'm frightfully ravenous. We'll find a loophole somehow, never fear. I reproach myself bitterly for not having done anything hitherto for Quarrendon.'

'You're young yet,' growled the old man, trying to wriggle away from his nephew.

'I am eight-and-twenty, God forgive me!' said Hilary. 'But,' he added, with an assumption of levity, 'I really *have* made some way of late. I dined with old Worstenleigh only last Friday—his influence is incalculable—and he dropped a sort of a hint. But there, *do* let me persuade you not to wear yourself out in this way. Close accounts with those folks—they're pestilent sharks, that's what they are, and ought to be put down by act of parliament. And, by the way, come and see old Worstenleigh's phiz. His daughter gave it me with her own. It's in my den. Come along; there's time enough. It wouldn't be such a mortal crime either if we didn't dress, just for once in a way—just you and I. Come.'

Uncle Jeth yielded with a grunt.

'So Worstenleigh has a daughter, has he?' he inquired, with a withered and rather plaintive bit of a smile.

'No end of a daughter. She's five feet ten if she's anything, and'—

'I never had much taste for tall women, Hilary—not that I'm a judge, and I believe they're commonly supposed to be amiable.'

'You *believe*! Now, I must say, uncle, your affectation of ignorance in such matters really amuses me.'

'Your grandmother was small—your paternal grandmother, I mean. Does she want to marry you, this Miss Worstenleigh?'

'The saints forbid!' cried Hilary. 'No, no, uncle. You mustn't jump to conclusions like that. She is a lady; therefore I pay her such poor attentions as I can. She is Worstenleigh's only child; therefore I endeavour to enlarge my ability to pay her such attentions as ladies love. But for marriage—that's quite another matter.'

'I don't follow you,' said old Jeth. 'Where is this portrait?'

They were in the temple of the joss. Instinctively, Hilary got between his uncle and the poor dumb idol. But he marked how the old man's eyes turned towards it, and how the furrows on his brow deepened almost into ferocity as he caught sight of it. It was an extraordinary thing, this craze of enmity in Jeth Anjou. It was a rare illustration of the survival of an element of savagery and superstition in spite of all counter influences of civilisation for centuries.

The master of Quarrendon glanced at the portrait. It did not interest him, however. There was no particular reason why it should, especially after Hilary's explicit avowal that he did not intend to marry Miss Worstenleigh. He felt that the thing had served merely as a diversion.

Having looked at it, he threw it down.

'I am going upstairs,' he said, and he moved away quickly, as if to oppose any effort Hilary might make to detain him. But ere he went through the door his eyes yet again shot towards the joss, and his fingers might have been seen to

close inwards, unconsciously, as if they were throttling something.

Hilary noticed all. When his uncle had gone he turned and scrutinised his inherited treasure, with a forced smile.

'You, my friend,' he said, as he took the squat nose between his fingers, 'will have to go to the melting-pot, I very much fear. Dash it all! this *is* disgusting news; but it must be faced. Poor old boy! . . . and poor little Amy! It will make a difference—there's no doubt about that.'

CHAPTER II.



IN the evening of Hilary Anjou's arrival at Quarrendon Manor, an atmosphere of lively expectation was pervading the old farm-house of Underwood, little more than half a mile from Quarrendon.

Jabez Tarver, the tenant of Underwood (he was rather more than that, for he held a first mortgage on the property for two thousand pounds), was brother to the Jim Tarver who had gone off as a sailor long ago, and found a moist grave in the Yellow Sea. A steady, shrewd fellow was this Jabez, and proud to be regarded, as he was, 'a warm man.' He had a family of two sons, as good a dame to look after the butter as ever man had, and a sort of relation ('niece' he called her, and the lads called her 'cousin') named Amy Grove.

Now Amy Grove was the daughter of Jim Tarver's widow by a second marriage. Jabez had helped Jim's widow very materially after her husband's death, until she married again. Later, when this second husband absconded to Australia, and died there, and the troubled woman also died, the farmer took up the little Amy, and ever since she had been as his own daughter.

Amy was now a tall, tender-eyed, smooth-cheeked, gentle, and altogether charming maiden of nineteen. Every one loved her—at least it seemed so. Certainly her so-called cousins Ezra and David did, though in different ways. Ezra, the elder brother, yearned to have her for his wife. David, on the other hand, felt towards her as if she had been his sister.

Both Jabez Tarver and Mrs Tarver asked for nothing better than that Providence should give Ezra his wish in this matter. Hitherto, it must be admitted, they had not had much encouragement; but, as they said, the girl was still young, and could scarcely be expected to know her own mind. Twice during the past year had Ezra impetuously asked Amy to let him think she would be his wife when she was a little older; and twice had he been rebuffed. The girl had vouchsafed him no other reply than this: 'I cannot, Ezra; I cannot, indeed.' Her flaming cheeks

and the sorrow in her voice had not told Ezra very much. He put it all down (thanks to his mother, who might be supposed to know) to virginal shyness, and meant to persevere. Nevertheless, he had begun to feel uneasy. Try as he might, he could not get Amy to look upon him with any except sisterly affection. This amply sufficed with David, but it was profound, heart-scaring irritation to the elder brother.

Once Mrs Tarver had interrogated Amy on the subject.

'My dear,' she had said, 'you're growing into a buxom young miss. You mustn't let the young men say what they please to you. I was married to your uncle at twenty, and there's not a mite of reason why you shouldn't get a husband as soon. How should you like that, my dear?'

But Amy had answered, crimson all over her pretty face:

'Please, don't talk about it, aunty.'

'Oh, but,' Mrs Tarver had continued sturdily, 'that's all stuff and nonsense. Men are men, and young women are young women; and marriage is just meant for every one. There's Ezra, now—take him. He'd make a rare good husband; there's no flightiness about Ezra. Where he loves he'll love always, and that's the kind of man a woman would always have if she could get him. There ain't a many like Ezra, and he's main fond of you, lovey; there's no denying it.'

So far the excellent woman had advanced well towards her purpose. But she was now quite nonplussed by a gush of tears from Amy's gray eyes, and a half-restrained burst of sobs.

'Name of goodness, lovey, whatever's the matter?' she demanded, with much concern. Having had no daughters herself, and as a girl having been wholly free from abnormal heart action and hysterics, she did not know as much about girlish natures as might have been expected.

But Amy had nothing to tell her in explanation of this terrifying show of sensibility. She could only rest her head on Mrs Tarver's roomy shoulder and quietly have her sob out. And when it was over her aunt did not reopen the subject, for fear of bringing on the tears again. She was not half as wise as most women. On consideration, she came to the amazing conclusion that the tears and sobs were the outward and visible (and audible) sign of the beginning of a proper—that is, a conjugal—affection for Ezra. She said so to her husband—who had no objection—and to Ezra himself. But Ezra was not so sure. He wished it might be so: that was all; and he determined that so desirable a fortress as Amy's heart should not be lost to him from backwardness in besieging it.

All this time Amy's young life had Hilary Anjou, and no one else, for its secret pivot. She thought of Hilary the first thing in the morning, and when she went to bed his face was with her to bless her. He loved her; he

had told her so again and again. That was enough for her. She wanted no one else's love—at least not in that way. She would have felt her lips polluted had they been kissed by any other young man.

It was, of course, shocking—this clandestine affection between these two. Yet neither of them so regarded it. Amy was the less likely of the twain to do this. How could that be shocking which warmed her life through and through, which filled her with noble thoughts and impulses, and which made her bright eyes more beautiful than ever with her secret sense of infinite happiness? As for Hilary, though a man of the world to some extent, he was a child in this matter. He never doubted that Amy would be his wife eventually, even as he never doubted that he would eventually be master of Quarrendon, with enough annual income to make it indifferent to him whether or no he got a firm footing in the courts of law.

Ezra Tarver alone of those at Underwood had the least suspicion how things stood between Amy and Hilary, and even he had no very good grounds for the fancy. He had noticed a certain look in Amy's eyes, which was like a dagger in him, when Hilary was being discussed; and also he had remarked the ease of Hilary's smile of greeting towards Amy when they chanced to meet. He would have given one of his little fingers to have acquired such an enchanting ease of manner. It did not occur to him that this simple trait could be the outcome of aught except a certain intimacy with Amy such as seemed denied to him.

At about eleven o'clock that morning a telegram had come to the farm from Hilary Anjou. It had been despatched from Rugby station, and simply said that he (Hilary) would be at Quarrendon in the evening, and towards eight o'clock hoped to be at Underwood 'to see the pups.'

The young barrister had, during the last eighteen months, developed a remarkable passion for St Bernard mastiffs. It was odd, yet true, that this passion was in its growth concurrent with his other passion. His uncle Jeth hated dogs. What more natural than that Hilary should ask Jabez Tarver to give him a corner of his yard for his canine protégés? Jabez would have done more than that for 'the young squire,' as he boldly called him.

Regularly, therefore, when he made his hurried flights from the Middle Temple to Quarrendon, he visited these delectable mastiffs; and as regularly he advised Jabez of his coming, either by letter or telegram.

The thrifty farmer did not mind a letter about the dogs, but a telegram seemed to him a needless piece of extravagance; and he said so openly, both to his family and to Master Hilary. But he did not know what Amy knew—to wit, that a letter meant that she was to meet him at the third stile from Underwood across the fields to

Quarrendon; whereas a telegram indicated the edge of a coppice just off the lane as the spot whereon he wished to take her once more to his heart, unseen of other human eyes than their own.

This particular telegram had caused particular excitement at Underwood, because, as it happened, the mastiff bitch Juno, who had recently given birth to four male whelps, seemed that morning very ill. She had been taken with convulsions. These fits recurred during the day, and, to Jabez's consternation, towards five o'clock in the afternoon Juno gave up the ghost.

'I'll never know how to face Mr Hilary over it,' the farmer said at tea-time.

'He must take his risks like other folks,' remarked Ezra. 'He ought to be beholden to you just the same.'

'That,' retorted the farmer severely, and with sublime disregard of reason, 'is a nohow way of looking at things. I'd liefer have lost one of the best rams.'

'Well, well, Jabez, we must e'en make the best of it,' said Mrs Tarver, with an audacious assumption of cheerfulness. 'What can it be that brings him down so all of a sudden, I wonder? You didn't hear no ill news of the old gentleman, any of you?'

No one had heard aught of the kind. But Ezra had his eyes on Amy Grove, and noticed with a miserable satisfaction that the girl was agitated. She looked fixedly into her tea-cup while Mrs Tarver was wondering about the young squire's purposes, and her bosom rose and fell much faster than usual.

At that moment Ezra Tarver might readily have been persuaded to commit a crime, and a very heinous crime to boot.

It was for the sake of the puppies, therefore, that Hilary broke away from the Quarrendon dinner-table almost immediately after the meal. He had a plausible pretext in his cigar. Jeth Anjou did not smoke, and did not care for the society of tobacco. Wherefore Hilary had no sooner lit his weed than he strolled outside with a cap on his head, and, with his hands in his pockets, moved away more and more quickly towards the narrow lane that led by the coppice to Underwood.

They soon met, these fond lovers!

Amy's heart almost choked her with its sweet agitation when she caught sight of the head she loved so well. She could say nothing—only look up at him between smiling and crying for joy, and put her arms on his shoulders, while he clasped her to him with the simple words, 'Well, sweetheart?'

Then he held her a little aloof while he searched her face with his keen eyes; and she on her part was content with this opportunity to see what effect time (that is, two months) had had upon him.

They seemed well satisfied, these two, with their brief inspection of each other.

'More and more of a woman every time, little one,' said Hilary gaily, as he kissed the happy, quivering lips again, and held his own lips towards Amy's that they might have fair-play. 'And always changed for the better!' he added.

These last words urged the girl out of her silence, which was indeed the speechlessness of ecstasy.

'Oh Hilary!' she whispered, and she hid her face against his breast.

"Oh Hilary!" Well, and what does that mean? Is it reproach, or appeal, or satiety, or what? Or is it the expression of your illimitable wretchedness?

He knew it was not this last, of course. Amy's eyes were so gloriously tell-tale.

'No,' said the girl. 'I am very, very happy; but—'

'But! This is worse and worse. Never until to-night have I heard you use that infamous conjunction. It is the first "but" that has ever come between us. Do you realise, my darling, the seriousness of the situation?'

The happy girl nestled her head against him, and wished the sun would stand still as it did in Joshua's time. Then she half turned her face up to Hilary's, and, with a fair wrinkle of doubt on her smooth brow, murmured:

'I have been thinking, Hilary, since you were here last, and I wonder—oh! I wonder so much—if you are sure that you—care for me really.'

'No. I don't care for you,' replied young Anjou, with quick assumed severity that was like a cruel pain to Amy. 'I don't care for you, I repeat. Care is a sickening sort of word. I thought we had settled all that long ago. Care for you, Amy! There must be no word less torrid than "love" used between us. I love you, Amy, better than ever, and it is my one prayer that this love may never diminish. Is that enough for you, little glutton?'

It must have been; for, although Amy said nothing in reply, she raised her face towards Hilary's with irresistible sweetness. Once again they embraced passionately.

Then, without warning, Hilary put his hand to his forehead and exclaimed:

'Amy, I ought to have acted differently. Confound it all! you must moderate your fascinations in future. I've bad news to tell you—very bad news.'

'Tell it me,' said the girl, looking up at her lover.

'My uncle is a poor man, and if I am to live I must work in future. Do you see what that means?'

'Will it take you from me, Hilary?' asked the girl, in a sudden terror, as she stood erect.

'If so, it will be the worst blow of all;

but if I can help it, it shall not. But you see, child, that it may necessitate long and tiresome waiting before we can be married.

'Oh!'

Amy sighed with joy, as she again let her head droop against Hilary's waistcoat.

'So long as I know you—care for me,' she whispered, 'I do not mind anything.'

Hilary repaid her with yet another kiss, this time upon her forehead. The next moment he urged her to stand apart.

'Your cousin is coming!' he exclaimed.

Amy looked where he looked.

'It is Ezra,' she said in a low voice, as if half-terrified. 'And he has seen us!'

CHAPTER III.



FOR the first time in his life since he had realised the vast gulf that separates a rich man from a man that has to work hard for a livelihood, Ezra Tarver did not touch his hat to Hilary

Anjou when they met. Jabez Tarver, honest man, was himself imbued with a respectful sense of the mightiness of the aristocracy, especially as represented by a squire of almost any degree. He had not the least sympathy with modern levelling ideas. 'A man's born this or that,' he was wont to say; and he held to this oracular statement even while he himself, by his steady industry, was slowly yet surely rising above the station in which he may be said to have been born. Jabez had done his best to instil his old-fashioned notions into the heads of his sons. It was scarcely likely that he would succeed. The weekly paper alone was a strong antidote to his teaching. Instinct, also, in the young men made them carp somewhat at these obsolete ideas.

Nevertheless, until to-day, Ezra had never given any outward sign to Hilary that he did not agree with his father in believing that the heir of Quarrendon was his superior.

'Well, Ezra?' said Hilary, quite cheerfully, as he stepped towards his discomfited rival. Ezra marked how he insinuated himself between him and the panic-stricken, shamefaced Amy.

'Good-evening!' muttered young Tarver. Then he looked round at Amy. Their eyes met.

'I came out to the coppice, Ezra,' stammered poor Amy, 'and—and'—

'Knocked against me. Didn't you?' said Hilary. 'Well, so much the better. I like to hear how you all are as soon as possible.'

'Then,' exclaimed Ezra, with a gleam of revenge in his eyes, 'she'll have told you all about the dogs?'

'Oh yes. I'll come along at once with you,' continued Hilary. 'By the way, I've been

thinking, if the whelps do well, I'll get rid of Juno. She ought to fetch a big price, and'—

Ezra made a hideous noise in his throat. Amy shivered as she saw the movement of his lips.

'Yes. Go on, Mr Hilary. Now, what might you be expecting for the old bitch?'

The barrister saw that something was very wrong; but he was quite in the dark as to the nature of the 'something.'

'Well, I don't know, you know,' he replied. 'You're a better judge of her worth. What do you say?'

'So she told you all about us at Underwood, did she, and she didn't tell you that? That's what I call a good un.'

'Ezra!' whispered Amy.

'I hear you,' proceeded the young farmer heatedly. 'You can hold your tongue, miss. Now, between ourselves, Mr Hilary Anjou, what do you think is the price of cat's meat just at present?'

Hilary drew himself up.

'I fail,' he said, 'to understand you.'

'She's dead,' whispered Amy. 'I forgot to tell you that.'

'She didn't forget something else, though, I'll swear,' cried Ezra. 'Look here, Hilary Anjou; you may be a gentleman. Then all I can say is that I'm very glad I'm not a gentleman.'

The three stopped short. Ezra and Hilary faced each other. The former was fast rushing into a passion that seemed likely to become ungovernable. Amy saw it, and, knowing as she did that he was strong as well as passionate, she trembled for her lover. But Hilary on his part was no child. Besides, he had the advantage of coolness and self-control. Ezra had turned as pale as his brown skin would let him appear, and his right fist was clenched as he glared at the other. But Hilary still held his right hand in his trouser-pocket, and there was a smile on his lips. The smile was forced, but Ezra did not see that.

'You are,' remarked the young barrister, 'just a trifle crazed. Amy, walk on ahead, please. I'll exchange a few words with your cousin.'

'It'll be something heavier than words,' shouted Ezra.

'That shall be as you please—after you've heard me. But, for the present, I shall feel obliged if you will repress your ungracious yearnings.'

This tone of sarcasm put the last straw of indignity upon young Tarver's overburdened soul.

'I'll wait for nowt,' he cried.

'Get away, Amy,' cried Hilary, in sudden anxiety; for the girl had cast herself upon her cousin with an appealing cry of 'Don't, Ezra—please, don't.'

But he was too late.

The young farmer was quite out of his right mind. Foiled of his legitimate prey, he took the victim that chance gave him. With one blow he struck the girl to the ground.

Then the revulsion came upon him, and he dropped on his knees by her side with the heart-broken words, 'Oh, my darling!'

Hilary had never until to-day guessed that he had a rival. The realisation of it instantly abated the rage that was in him against this 'murderous young brute,' as he thought him.

'Get up, man,' said the barrister. 'A pretty pass you've brought things to! Amy dear, (and he drew his arm under her neck)—ah! you can open your eyes!—that's a comfort! It's lucky for you, Ezra Tarver, you didn't hit straight. An inch lower and you'd have had murder on your soul, and thoroughly deserved the consequences. Fetch some water, man, and don't stand twisting like an acrobat.'

Without a word in reply, the young farmer walked away. His walk soon turned to a run. There was a brook at the base of the hedge by the coppice. Here he filled his hat, and then he ran back to the others.

In the meanwhile Amy had recovered her senses. She was not much hurt. The shock had momentarily dazed her—that was nearly all. As Hilary said, she owed it entirely to Ezra's unsteadiness that she was not killed. The blow had missed her temples and struck her on the top of the head.

Hilary kissed her, and the gray eyes resumed their old composure in an instant.

'You are yourself again?' he asked. 'The young cur!'

The 'Yes' in reply came gradually, and a smile followed it. Then it seemed as if, for the first time since the blow, Amy understood what had happened.

'Say nothing about it—at home, Hilary,' she pleaded. 'Poor Ezra! he did not mean it.'

'If you are sure you feel pretty well, I shall not mention it,' said Hilary.

'I am quite well—there is nothing at all the matter.'

To prove it the girl, aided by her lover, rose to her feet; and in this condition Ezra found her on his return.

She held out her hand to the miserable young farmer, whose face was a study for a physiognomist.

'You did not mean it, Ezzy,' she said softly.

The use at such a time of the pet name which was now never on her lips was too much for Ezra. Instead of touching the little white hand that was extended to him (she did no work at Underwood to spoil it—Mrs Tarver took care of that), the young farmer broke into a paroxysm of weeping.

'I was mad—mad, to do—it,' he sobbed.

'I'd rather have died, I would. You know how—how—I love you.'

'Yes, Ezra,' said Amy quietly. 'It's all right again. No one need know anything about it; and, indeed, it's nothing to be vexed about if they did. Only, no more quarrels about me, please. It would be different, perhaps, if I was worth it—though I don't think it would even then. Won't you shake hands, Ezra?'

Young Tarver this time took Amy's hand and wrung it till she winced. Then he let it fall, and with bowed head swung away heavily towards the farm.

Hilary watched this scene of reconciliation with interest. He felt a certain pity for Ezra Tarver. That, however, was as nothing to the admiration and new love Amy awoke in him.

'There!' he exclaimed as she turned to him; 'we'll hope that chapter's closed. From the bottom of my heart, I feel grateful his huge fist missed its mark. I should have lost the best and most lovable girl on this earth: that's enough to make a man talk selfishly. Besides, he or I would have been hung—he'd have deserved it anyway. And now, dear, let us follow him and make it up completely.'

They followed Ezra accordingly, with the pale gold of the evening horizon in their faces as they went, and the dewy air fanning the brief fever from Amy's forehead. But they did not catch him up. He took good care of that. Sorrow had come down upon him like a black cloud, and he was in no humour to exchange another word with any one. He did not even go home. From the lane he turned aside towards a broad stretch of common land over which three villages had grazing rights, and here, among the heather and gorse and the lowing cattle, he wandered to and fro for a couple of hours, pondering dismally until the stars were bright over his head.

Even then he was nothing like calm. It seemed to him that by this one chance act he had made an Ishmael of himself. Amy's words of pardon he wholly forgot. He fancied that she, and his father and mother, and David, and all the farm servants, and every one for miles round, would henceforth and for ever point the finger of reprobation at him. And, worst of all, he felt that he could in no way honestly protest against such treatment.

Thus it was about ten o'clock when he moved from the common towards home. He hoped he might sneak into the house and upstairs without seeing any one.

Now, there was a certain farm owned by a man named Gannett at that corner of the common by which Ezra proposed to regain the highway. John Gannett had a daughter, Alice, who had long in secret worshipped Ezra Tarver as a girl sometimes does worship the object of her heart's aspirations, even when he pays her no manner of attention.

Old Gannett had sent Alice out into the yard to see that the poultry-pen was securely fastened. When she had satisfied herself in this matter, the girl went and leaned against the gate which let from the farmyard upon the common. It was the very time for a quiet, happy (though illusory) dream; and so Alice, with her long hair loose upon her shoulders (she was six months younger than Amy), set her face betwixt her hands and gazed at the stars, the dim shapes of the cattle on the common, and the suggestive gloom beyond.

The girl had got to the point at which she so often stopped—namely, that there was no man in the world to compare with Ezra Tarver—when, without the least intimation of his coming, Ezra himself drifted across the common by the gate. His head was still bent.

Alice held her breath and felt as if she were seeing a ghost. But this inertia possessed her only for a moment.

‘Ezra Tarver,’ she whispered solemnly.

Young Tarver looked up, startled.

‘Oh!’ cried Alice, ‘whatever is the matter? Won’t you come in to father? You do look so tired.’

Ezra stood still, with his sorrowful eyes steadily upon the girl’s face, which was pretty enough in the romantic twilight.

‘No, I cannot come in,’ he said.

‘Do, Ezra,’ pleaded Alice. The divine, womanly instinct told her he was in trouble. If only she might be privileged to be his comforter, even but for an instant!

Then the farmer moved a step nearer, and, without flinching in his gaze, said:

‘Do you know, Alice, what I have done this night?’

‘No,’ the girl replied, not without a horrid sensation of creepiness: there was such an eerie tone in young Tarver’s voice.

‘I have struck a woman.’

‘You, Ezra! Oh! I don’t believe it.’

‘But I did. It was Amy, too.’

‘Amy Grove! Then you didn’t mean to do it. You might have done it in a passion.’

‘It was in a passion.’

‘Then it isn’t half as bad. But however came you to strike Amy, of all people?’

Alice Gannett’s heart was capering within her. If Ezra could strike Amy, he could not be in love with her. And if he was not in love with Amy, perhaps—perhaps he might some time perceive, and like to perceive, how fond she (Alice) was of him. Oh, if it might be so!

‘It was an accident, but it makes no difference,’ replied Ezra mournfully. ‘I can never hold up my head again.’

‘Ezra,’ whispered the girl tremulously—for it was heaven itself to her to hear him thus open his heart to her—‘do come in to father. You shall have one of his long pipes; and if you’ll let me, I’ll fill it like I do his. Father says

there’s nothing like a pipe of tobacco when you’re in trouble.’

Ezra went, Alice herself holding the gate for him. And he smoked three pipes of tobacco with Mr Gannett, who was a talkative old rake of a fellow; and while he smoked and listened he looked at Alice, whose eyes were at their brightest, and Alice looked at him. Peace came gradually to him.

At eleven o’clock—there was no mistaking old Gannett’s kitchen clock: it made as much noise as an ironworks—Mr Gannett moved in his chair and put up his pipe.

‘Ally will see you out, Ezra,’ he said; ‘and I’ll come round about that theer hay i’ the mornin’.’

‘Do you feel better now?’ the girl asked, timidly enough, as she held the door open.

‘You’ve done me a power of good, Alice, and I’ll never forget it,’ Ezra replied.

Then they clasped hands. Alice Gannett went to bed that night a very happy little maid. Ezra had squeezed her hand as *she* should never forget. Besides, she knew young Tarver was a man of his word. Every one said so. She was, of course, very sorry for Amy—in a sense. But, for her part, she would enjoy being struck by Ezra Tarver, if she could be as sure of his love as, hitherto, it seemed to her, Amy Grove had been. She was, let it be repeated, a happy little girl that night.

CHAPTER IV.



LEFT behind by Ezra in the growing gloom of the evening, Hilary Anjou and Amy Grove gradually slackened their pace. Each felt that a crisis had occurred in both their lives.

Amy was secretly elated, yet she was not so selfish in her joy in this unlooked-for publication of their mutual love that she did not sympathise with Hilary. She could not guess why her lover had wished that their love should for a time be kept from the world; but she trusted him, and was dimly sorry for his sake, though glad for her own.

As for Hilary, he saw in an instant that he should now have to tell old Tarver and Mrs Tarver that he meant Amy to be his wife.

That, however, was a matter of less consequence than the sequel. His uncle also came into count. It was one thing to gratify the pride of the farmer by informing him that Amy was to be considered betrothed to him; it was another thing altogether to announce the news to old Jeth. Hilary knew just how it would affect his uncle. It would seem to him the crowning humiliation of his life. After his own cynical fashion, he would exclaim that it was time for him to utter his *Nunc Dimittis*.

Both the honour and position of the Anjous in the county would seem to him to have gone from the family for ever.

In this state of mind Hilary could not pretend to be vivacious. Having ascertained decisively that Amy was none the worse for Ezra Tarver's brutality, he seemed to forget her presence. He spoke but once on their way from the coppice to the farm gate.

'I suppose,' he said on this occasion, 'that fellow can be trusted not to do himself a mischief. You don't think he means to throw himself into a pond, or anything of that kind?'

'Ezra! Oh no. Why should he?' replied Amy. She could not see that an event like the recent one might appear to Ezra infinitely more serious than it seemed to herself.

But at the gate Hilary paused for a moment.

'Amy,' he said, 'I shall have it out with your uncle this evening.'

'Have what out, Hilary?'

'Where are your senses, child? I shall tell him about—about us; you and me.'

'Shall you? Oh, I am so glad!'

'There is no help for it, dear,' continued the barrister rather moodily. 'I hope it will be for the best.'

'I am sure it will be, if'—

'If what?'

'If you are sure I am fit to be your wife, dear Hilary,' the girl whispered.

'I am sure of that at any rate,' was his reply.

Then they separated, Amy to roam off into the garden to confide her happiness to the flowers and the nightingale that might be expected already to be singing its evening hymn in the poplars above the wall where the currants always ripened so famously betimes, and Hilary to give the front door the rat-a-tat it heard only when he was in the neighbourhood.

Jabez and Mrs Tarver hurried to let in the young squire, and they greeted him with the utmost cordiality. David, on his part, grinned a welcome, and tendered his hand to be shaken without any sense of personal shortcomings. He had had his fingers pressed by a duchess ere now. That was during the election times, when the duchess would have done a good deal more than condescend to be kind to a handsome young farmer in order to increase her second son's chances of being returned as a parliamentary representative for the county.

'You'll be worrying about them whelps, I'll be bound, Mr Hilary,' said Dame Tarver kindly. She noticed the look of anxiety on her visitor's face.

'I can hardly say that,' replied Hilary, with a smile. 'Still, I'd like to see them. Ezra has told me about the bereavement. It's a nuisance, but I'm not going to break my heart about it.'

'Indeed, Mr Hilary, that's just what I said when it came about,' exclaimed the farmer.

Dame Tarver looked mischievous; her husband's words were so very much at discord with the truth.

'And,' continued old Tarver, 'we'll get the whelps weaned by hook or crook, and in six months' time I'll be darned if there'll be much to grieve about. But you'll be wishing to see them for yourself. Suppose you didn't run across our Amy outside?'

'Oh yes, I did.'

'Well, now, haven't she growed a fine one? It'll be the same with the whelps. Give me time, and there'll be nowt to grieve about.'

'The idea!' murmured Dame Tarver, with a diverting affectation of disgust. 'Fancy his putting Amy and the dogs on the same shelf, Mr Hilary! Not but what they're pretty creatures, the puppies, surely.'

'Whelps by Jack Sprat out of Juno couldn't be nowt else, missus,' said Jabez gravely. 'It's no civility to be talking before Mr Hilary like that.'

The barrister, notwithstanding his anxieties, could not withhold a laugh.

'He's a tyrant, Mrs Tarver, as ever, I see,' he said; 'and for your slight upon my dogs I heartily forgive you. We know each other, I think, too well to fall out over a word or two.'

'Sure-ly, Mr Hilary,' said the dame.

'Come, come, missus, get out the whisky, and we'll be back in no time to have a sup of it, eh, Mr Hilary?' exclaimed the farmer.

Hilary nodded, and the three men left the room.

Mr Tarver was concerned that the young squire paid so little attention to his canine pets. Hilary just looked at them, caressed the heads of the adult dogs, tumbled the puppies about with his stick and the toe of his boot, and seemed to have had enough of them.

'You've kind of lost your liking for them, Mr Hilary, I'm thinking,' he suggested.

'Not that so much. But, all the same, I'm afraid—I'm very much afraid, Mr Tarver, I shall have to sell them.'

'Sell the dawgs! Why, sir, the world's turned upside down, then.'

'From one or two points of view—personal to myself, you understand—perhaps it has. I want a word with you alone. Excuse me, David.'

Mr Tarver's second son showed his teeth amiably, and slouched back into the house.

'Well, to be sure, now,' said the farmer, rubbing his heavy red cheeks with both his hands, 'I'll be main sorry if it's anything unpleasant as touching your uncle as you've got to tell me.'

'It's that, and something else that touches you quite as much as it touches him.'

The farmer screwed his eyes together.

'Now, look here, Mr Hilary,' he said in-

petuously; 'I'm good for another thousand, and it'd be a pleasure to me if Mr Anjou'd take it and have it tacked on to the same straddle as the others. I don't profess to pry into other folks' affairs, leastways where they don't matter to me, but it ain't no secret at Quarrendon, and other-wherees too for the matter of that, that Mr Anjou's got a bit short. Servants are such nagging hussies. And four per cent.'s good enough for me. How do it strike you, Mr Hilary?'

'My dear old friend,' replied Hilary, 'I hope he won't take your thousand, though things are pretty dark with us. I see you know about as much as I do on that subject. And now for the other. I'm a pauper, Mr Tarver, and yet I want to have your Amy for my wife.'

Old Tarver gasped.

'Our Amy! You, Mr Hilary?'

'Yes. She loves me.'

'The little minx has the darned check to *love* you, did you say, Mr Hilary?'

'There's no cheek, darned or otherwise, in the matter, I hope,' said Hilary, with a smile. 'I assure you she is more of a catch to me than I am to her. But I thought I ought to tell you, don't you know, and Mrs Tarver. You don't mind, do you?'

'Mind! Bless us all! Poor Jim's widder's little girl, by her second husband, to have gone and fell in love with you, and never made no sign at all! It's been going on some time, I presume, Mr Hilary?'

'Well, say a year. But what does that matter, old fellow?'

'Oh, I reckon it don't matter, so to speak; but I'm so dazzled and all. And to think as the missus should be so cocksure of bending her to take our Ezra! I never *did* think as she were made for him, somehow. But the poor lad'll be hit hard—he will that. You don't know Ezra, Mr Hilary?'

'I fancy I know him pretty well, Mr Tarver; but I hope he'll get over it.'

'One thing, Mr Hilary—and the old man turned squarely towards the barrister and put a heavy hand on his shoulder—'you're sure, now, it ain't just a passing kind of a fancy, like a heifer has for a bunch o' grass? You won't turn agin her after enj'ying her freshness, so to speak? I ask your pardon if I'm coarse, but human nature is coarse at times, Mr Hilary, according to them weekly newspapers.'

Hilary was at first disposed to resent these words in his uncle's tenant. But his good sense prevailed. He valued them as they deserved to be valued.

'I *am* sure,' he said; 'there's my hand on it. It is no passing fancy. Amy is a girl any man would do well to marry.'

'Then there's a downright "Done!" on it,' exclaimed old Tarver stoutly as he gripped the proffered hand; 'and I'm a high man indeed

this night to think as we've had the rearing of a lass as has took your eye, Mr Hilary, *and* your heart, which is far better, as the Scripture tells us. As for Ezra, he'll just have to look other-wherees for his stock; and though I'll not say but what I'm sorry to see the poor lad vexed, as he will be—darned vexed!—mcbbe he'll happen on a wench that'll take more kindly to the milk-pans than our Amy—God bless and keep her, Mr Hilary.'

'Amen!' said Hilary.

'And as for your being a pauper,' continued the farmer excitedly, 'I'll not believe it. It 'ud never do for there not to be a Anjou—he called it 'Anjow,' honest man—at Quarrendon. We hev our ups and our downs, all of us, in this vale o' tears, as I've heard it called, though I didn't know it for one; and, dammec, Mr Hilary! just you hold on, and make the old gentleman hold on, and sure as lambing-time (which I never knew not to come) there'll be a fine fat season of prosperity for you all yet awhile. But what a gab I've got on me! It's all along of knowing as our Amy've had the impudence to set her heart on you.'

'That's all right,' laughed Hilary. 'Then we'll consider it settled. I'd rather *you* broke it to Mrs Tarver.'

'Oh, I'll break it to her, Mr Hilary. She'll kiek a bit, I warrant; but let her, say I.'

'And I, Mr Tarver, as soon as I've straightened affairs a little at the Manor, shall return to London and get my shoulder to the wheel. I shall hope to trouble you to hand Amy over to me in a year or two at most.'

'There ain't much doubt,' said the farmer slowly, 'as you'll do pretty much what you please with them Lunnoners, if you mek up your mind to try.'

'I'm sure,' rejoined Hilary, 'I'm obliged to you for your good opinion of me, old friend, and I only trust I may verify your words. So now you see why I think of selling the dogs.'

'I'll sell none on 'em, Mr Hilary, sir,' retorted the farmer. 'If it's the money you want, I don't see as a straddle on sich fine critters as them ain't just as good as a straddle on a house. I'll loan you a hundred pound on 'em to-morrow, and be glad—at two per cent.—and?—'

Mrs Tarver's voice was now heard calling 'Jabez! Jabez!' Hilary thrust his arm into the old man's, and thus they returned to the house.

'Not a word about it to Mrs Tarver until afterwards,' said the barrister; and the farmer acquiesced.

The whisky was soon drunk, and Hilary could not be persuaded to smoke more than one cigar in the parlour. Old Tarver had such a mirthful twinkle in his eyes that the barrister was afraid every moment that the secret would be let loose

upon Mrs Tarver and David. Amy had some work in her hands, and she gave all her attention to it. Just for the sport's sake, old Tarver now and then addressed a remark to her to compel her to look up. She saw instantly that Hilary had told him all, and fair was the bloom on her cheeks when her eyes met her adopted uncle's.

It must not be supposed that Mrs Tarver was blind to her husband's humours. Twice or thrice she asked him what ailed him. He put her off the scent completely (as he imagined) by frivolous replies about matters connected with the farm. David guffawed broadly at these answers, and Mrs Tarver was more than ever convinced that as soon as their guest was gone she was in for a fat piece of news.

She and her husband expressed their wonder that Ezra did not show himself. But as Hilary had already seen him, they did not make so much of his absence as they otherwise would have done.

At length the barrister rose and gave his hand to Mrs Tarver. Then it came to Amy's turn, and in a moment the keen-sighted dame guessed what was in the wind. The girl's crimson cheeks and her faint 'Good-night' in reply to Hilary, added to the old farmer's beaming face as he watched the scene, told her quite enough.

Hilary was by no means in a state of despondency as he plodded across the fields back to Quarrendon. And yet the day had been remarkable for conferring upon him such a blow and such a responsibility as do not often come upon one man's shoulders in the space of a single four-and-twenty hours.

CHAPTER V.



MRS TARVER reserved herself for the affray with her husband until the household had gone to bed.

'I dunnot care for the look of your face, master,' she said rebukely when Hilary had left them. 'But we'll have the wenches in and say the prayers.'

The bell was rung therefore, and Mrs Tarver (she always did it) took the large, well-thumbed book of family prayers, and went upon her knees with a certain determination that made both Jabez and Amy feel uncomfortable. There was no doubt the good dame, as a rule, was master in the house, and she never looked more like it than when she donned her fine gold-rimmed spectacles and acted as the priestess of Underwood.

Though a trifle uneasy in the thought of the conflict that was impending, Amy could not but remember Hilary in her prayers; and the memory of him, and what he now was to her,

braced her infinitely more than her antieipation of discord at home disturbed her.

'You can go off to your bed, David,' said the dame when the maids had departed, with a respectful 'Good-night' to their employers.

Amy was preparing to follow David, when Mrs Tarver stopped her.

'Your uncle, lass, looks as if he could stomach another pipeful. Lend him your little finger.'

This was a mere ruse, and was accepted as such by the three who were concerned in it.

When David's heavy steps had done sounding up the stairs, the dame shut the door and faced the others.

'What's all this grimacin' an' oglin' about, Jabez?' she demanded sternly. Whether from design or forgetfulness, she had not removed her spectacles.

'Oh, I'll tell you, missus, fast enough,' was her husband's reply. 'Give your unky a kiss, Amy, and'—

'That'll wait a bit,' said Mrs Tarver. 'Sit down, Amy. I've a notion your uncle's foolish goings-on wi' Mr Hilary have summat to do wi' you, my dear. If a egg's addled, it's no good keeping the hen on it. We'll come to a understanding this night, if you please.'

Amy sat down and resumed her work. The blush was again upon her cheeks. But she did not like this turn of affairs.

'You're rayther too previous, missus,' said Jabez, puffing smoke with a will, so that his head was almost clouded with it. 'I meant to ha' had it out wi' you—and there's an end to it.'

'Then out wi' it, and no more sech long beginnings,' rejoined Mrs Tarver.

'Young Mr Hilary, missus, have been to see they puppsies, and he've been to see summat else—eh, Amy?'

The farmer chuckled. The chuckle was like oil to the fire of his dame's indignation.

'None of your half-sayings, Jabez,' she clamoured. 'I can see through a hedge like my betters; but there's times as I want to be set right i' the middle o' the field.'

'And so you shall, then. Young Mr Hilary, he've been and axed point-blank to hev Amy, here, "for better nor worse, till death does us part," and all the rest of it. I reckon that's the state of the case, miss, ain't it?'

In response to this appeal, Amy could only blush deeper than ever, and try to work as if her fingers were moving for a wager.

'Hum!' ejaculated Mrs Tarver. 'Go on wi' the tale—a nice un, I will say.'

'There's no more of it, missus—not now. Here endeth the fust chapter. Please God, the the second chapter'll begin some time, and the wench'll live happy ever afterwards; like the story-books.'

'Well, to be sure!' cried Mrs Tarver, taking off her glasses.

The farmer noticed with definite uneasiness that his dame's hands trembled as she folded the spectacles and laid them aside with strained deliberation.

'An' hev you the gumption, Jabez, to tell me,' she proceeded, with growing wrath, 'that you encouraged the poor young gentleman in his foolishness?'

Amy looked up with a pained face.

'Yes, foolishness, wench—for it's nothing in the world else. You just a nobody that your uncle pieked up afore you was fledged an' kep' you till a fine coat o' feathers you've growed, sure-ly!'

'I'll not hev that said of her—and to her face, too, missus,' retorted Jabez. The farmer laid down his pipe, even as his wife had abandoned her spectacles. If it was to be a battle-royal, there should be no unfair advantage on either side.

'But I *will* say it, and say it twenty times, too, if it likes me. Power o' goodness, and you to know what was meant to be! Men are the biggest noodles i' the world, sure-ly.'

'Please, aunty, let me go,' petitioned Amy, standing up. 'I have *such* a headache.'

'A headache! Stuff an' nonsense! Sit down again, miss. We haven't given you bit an' sup an' pretty clothes, an' kep' you from s'illing your finger-nails all these years for you to turn again and rend us in the season o' gratitude. Amy Grove, just you hark to me. There's our son Ezra eating of his heart out for want of you. It's just murder to give him the mitten in this outrageous way, and it's the hoity-toitiest imperence into the bargain, as ever I see. There's nobody but what can't soe he's a ch'ico mate for a young woman of a deal better bringing up than you've had, Amy Grove; and there's a many that's after him, casting of their eyes up and cooking of their heads on one side; and only to think as he ain't to have his will of the one as we've fed an' reared for the puppose. It's a pack o' nonsense, Jabez, an' the sooner you let Mr Hilary understand it the less mischief there'll be done.'

Mrs Tarver, being stout, here needed breath. She jerked herself back in her arm-chair and frowned formidably.

'Go it,' said her husband. 'Hev it all out in one bu'st.'

This tantalising invitation seemed to electrify the mistress of Underwood. She started forward again.

'Hev it come to that?' she exclaimed, with a sob in which passion and pathos were adroitly mingled.

'It ain't no manner o' use kickin' again a house, missus; that's all I means,' said Jabez, relenting in his tone.

But Mrs Tarver covered her face from the eyebrows to the chin with her two plump

hands, and broke wildly into hiccoughs and tears.

'I've been,' she stammered, 'your true an' lawful wife—an' a dutiful one as ever was—these five-an'-twenty years, and now you cast me off like an old rag! There niver was sech a miserable, poor woman as me. Hands off, miss.'

The jerk of petulance and renewal of the high-handed tone with which she rebuffed poor Amy, whose anguish was excessive, and who could not, if she would, have kept herself from at least trying to console her aunt in her unparalleled affliction, spoilt all.

'You'd better go to your bed, lovey,' said the old farmer, addressing his niece.

'She shan't,' cried Mrs Tarver; 'not till I've had my say out. You may cast me off, an' I'll not speak a word agin you; but if it's my dying night, I'll tell her she's a false, deceitful, upstart, unthankful lussy, and I'll niver call her Amy again—not unless she comes back to her senses. The idea of her *daring* to love Mr Hilary!'

Mr Tarver elucked a second time.

'That,' he remarked, 'is fast-rate. We're getting on. We're of the same mind, I can see. It *was* owdacious of her—the coaxin' little puss.'

'Oh nuncle!' cried Amy, 'I can't bear any more of it. I couldn't help it—I really couldn't. And indeed I should never, *never* have thought of—of caring for him if he hadn't first told me time after time that—that—'

'He loved your snarin' little ways an' your dove's eyes—eh?' suggested old Jabez.

'Aunty, *may* I go?' repeated Amy, with the prettiest wrinkles of distress upon her forehead.

'Go, i' God's name, an' a good riddance,' was the reply. 'Where is my son Ezra?'

'I—I don't know, aunty,' stammered the poor girl.

'No, an' you dunnot care. Ho'll be in the churchyard after this, mark my words, an' his sperrit'll come an' p'int the finger at you when you're settin' in your luxuries and drawing-rooms with fine ladies and gentlemen as you ain't fit to black the boots of. A nice mess we've made of it, my man, a-rearin' of her up above her station, which ought to ha' been ten times as low as our own.'

'Good-night!' wailed the tortured girl as she left the room, with her head bent low. She was paying a terrible price for her love, she felt. And, more than dimly now, the thought came to her that she might not be destined for Hilary in spite of all he had said to her, and in spite of her uncle's goodwill.

But Jabez followed her out into the hall, kissed her, and caressed her tear-stained cheek as he whispered:

'Keep up thy heart, dear.'

When she was alone with her husband Mrs Tarver changed considerably, even as her husband did. The latter took up his pipe again and smoked it sullenly.

Jabez was the first to speak.

'You ain't the manager you was, Susan,' he observed dryly. 'If Ezzy had iver had a chance wi' her, you've flummoxed it.'

'There's time to show that yet,' was the reply as the dame dried her eyes. Her dramatic gust of misery was meant more for Amy than for Jabez, who might be expected to know her too well to be suddenly influenced by such a demonstration.

'I'll tek one more dose of grog,' said the farmer—if *you* please. You've about dried the human natur' out of me. Susan, you're a vixen spoiled; that's what you are. Niver since we went to church together hev I seen you in sech nasty fettle.'

'I've niver enjoyed sech a disapp'intment as this, Jabez,' was the sobered reply, as the excellent housewife prepared her lord and master's beverage.

'An' the best of it is,' proceeded old Jabez, 'you've done not a mossul o' good wi' your cussing an' swearing. The poor little lass! Why, darn it! you'd hev capsized the stomach of a kitchen wench wi' sech language; and to think as you should hev done it to our Amy, poor dear! And for nothing in the natur' of a crime, too; only for letting her heart-strings go same as you let yours when I came courtin' of you at Sunningdale six-and-twenty years ago. Mrs Tarver, where's your bowels? I'm more'n a bit ashamed of you—and that for the first time since we was wed.'

Dame Tarver showed symptoms of becoming plaintive again. Her large frame quivered, while her eyes rested mournfully, yet with very evident affection, upon her noble old husband. She never loved him more than on the rare occasions when he took the reins of manhood firmly in his hands and ousted her from the supremacy in the household which he was generally well content to let her have.

'And now,' said Jabez, 'let's put out the lights and follow the lass's lead. Ezzy can look after hisself; he's gone five-and-twenty.'

'Five-and-twenty the last tenth of April, Jabez!'

'Yes; trust you for knowing it.'

They went upstairs softly enough, considering their size, Jabez leading.

But on the landing, where the old brown oak clothes-chest stood, the farmer stopped, looked across the candle-light at his wife, and slightly nodded his head towards Amy's door.

Mrs Tarver whimpered ever so gently. Her fall was as tremendous as her recent dignity and anger had been.

But she fulfilled her husband's desire: she quietly opened Amy's door. The girl was sitting on the bed crying as girls will cry when, after being radiantly joyful, something comes to hurl them into the bottomless pit of despair.

'There, there, lovey!' murmured Dame Tarver, with her arm round Amy's neck and her lips to her cheek; 'I am a wicked old woman. Say you forgive your poor old aunty, and get into your warm bed.'

'Oh aunty!' cried the girl, taking Mrs Tarver passionately to her heart. 'Of course I knew you couldn't mean it *all*.'

'Of course not, dearie. There, there! we're friends again; and perhaps, please God, you may be Ezzy's wife after all.'

But afterwards, when she was alone once more, Amy said to herself, 'Please God, no!'

CHAPTER VI.



HILARY did not, as he meant to do, tell his uncle the next morning that he had made election of a wife. He scarcely felt equal to it; moreover, it seemed to him that old Jeth

Anjou was not equal to bearing the intelligence in a comfortable manner.

The early post had brought yet another letter from the Throgmorton Street people. The stock-markets had been in a wild condition, and Mr Anjou's holdings had still further depreciated. In view of a possible (indeed, a highly probable) worsening of prices, the Throgmorton Street people would feel obliged to Jeth Anjou, Esquire, if, with the cheque for £2941, 14s., 11d., already due, he would include an amount of, say, £500 for contingencies. Money was tight—very—in the City, and the brokers were hard pressed in several directions. They preferred not to wait until settling day, if it was all the same to Jeth Anjou, Esquire. Things *might* improve—that is, prices might go up; but really there were certain symptoms of panic on 'Change, and it was quite likely that stocks would fall very seriously indeed.

The master of Quarrendon groaned as he threw this appetising epistle to his nephew. It did not add to Hilary's appetite either.

'This,' the latter said, 'will never do. You must give me a power of attorney to do what I think best with Messrs Rise & Drop, and I'll take the first train to town this morning.'

'You think there's no help for it but to close accounts, Hilary?'

'There might be a way out of it, but we can't afford—that is, of course, you can't—to trifle with time. Just now you seem to be losing money at the rate of a few hundreds a day. That would be an enjoyable income if it were an income, but it's the very deuce to be mulcted of, even if you could bear it.'

'And I can't do that, as you know. You had better see one of the big auctioneers at the same time.'

'That,' said Hilary, 'I emphatically will not

do. I hope your other letters are pleasanter than this one.'

Uncle Jeth turned to them wearily. They were not likely to be *very* pleasant. He had next to no family correspondence; nor was he a member of any learned or convivial societies. Only one of the letters drew an exclamation from him.

'Do you remember Mr Parkinson, Hilary?' he asked.

'What! the Commodore? Well, rather! If a fellow can't remember his godparents his brain isn't good for much!'

'Ah, I forgot; that explains it. He says he's likely to be in our county on Friday—to-day's Thursday—and will give me a call. Wants to know what you're doing, and so forth.'

'Well, I shall be glad to see him, uncle. The last I heard of him was that he had almost unhinged himself pottering about among Chinese manuscripts and that sort of thing. He's quite at the top of the tree, you know, in Oriental mysteries.'

'A room shall be got ready for him,' said old Jeth dismally.

'Why, yes, surely, uncle. And, if you will allow me, I'll ring for the dogcart at once. I dare say I can get back to-night, or the first thing in the morning else.'

Before leaving Quarrendon, Hilary penned a short note to Jabez Tarver, asking him to be kind enough not to let word of his and Amy's engagement reach the Manor for a day or two. It would, he said, never do that his uncle should hear of it from any but his own lips; and this was impossible at present for certain reasons which necessitated his immediate departure for town.

This done, he was rattled through the green lanes under the shade of the elms and oaks, with the sweet perfumes of the teeming country offering themselves to him like incense.

The business with Messrs Rise & Drop was none too agreeable. It was out of the question to give them a cheque even for the settlement amount. A thousand pounds on account was the best that could be done. This the head of the firm for long shook his head at. It was, he declared, little better than nothing. But eventually he accepted it, with a very positive eagerness, too, upon Hilary's remark as he was preparing to fold the cheque up and repocket it, that a bankruptcy was the only course open to his uncle. The stocks standing in Jeth Anjou's name were not sold on the spot, as Hilary wished. Messrs Rise & Drop now professed themselves confident that the worst of the crisis was over, and that the reaction would soon set in. It would, they said, be suicidal to throw the scrip on the market when prices were about as low as they well could be.

Having done with the brokers, Hilary called upon a newspaper editor of his acquaintance, and

mentioned his ardent desire for literary work of some kind. The editor laughed at first; Hilary's request seemed to him so innocent. But he was a good fellow at heart, and he gave a promise that he would do what he could. As a beginning, he let the barrister carry off three three-volume novels (a mighty package), which he was to review at his leisure, to show of what he was capable.

By this time the afternoon had got nearly into the evening. Hilary therefore turned his face towards Easton. For about the first time in his adult existence, he reached that classic portico afoot. The nine volumes of fiction did not make him think highly of the pleasures of metropolitan pedestrianism.

This evening also the barrister forbore to tell his uncle about Amy. He listened guiltily to the old man's chatter about the Underwood property, and Jabez Tarver's desire to buy its freehold; and he acquiesced feebly enough when Uncle Jeth observed that, since old Tarver was willing to buy the farm at pretty much what price was asked of him, it was running in the teeth of circumstances not to let him have it rather than throw it upon the market.

'He shall know all about it to-morrow,' Hilary assured himself. 'Poor old chap! I'm doing *him* no harm in withholding the shock from him as long as I dare.'

This was a sophistical way of putting it, however, and not satisfactory.

The next morning, before either Jeth or his nephew were downstairs, Commodore Parkinson walked up the drive to the Manor, rang the bell, and astonished the housemaid by stepping on to the uncleaned doorsteps and entering as if he were doing nothing uncommon.

'You needn't disturb them, my girl,' the visitor said kindly. 'I'll amuse myself in the library till breakfast. I shall enjoy it exceedingly.'

Commodore Parkinson was an arant eccentric, and revelled in his reputation as such. He was a short, stout man, prematurely bald, and with eyes that seemed quite worn out by their harrowing acquaintance with Chinese characters. Among his other uncommon habits was that of turning night into day for a month at a time. He did not, of course, mean to vex his host at Quarrendon by such abnormality. But he could not resist the temptation to travel from the north, where he had been staying, by the night mail, which set him loose at a station whence he could walk to the Manor in the very prime of the morning.

If he had not been as amiable and generous a man as he was eccentric, the Commodore would have been voted a nuisance by those whom he favoured with his society. As it was, every one who knew him either loved or greatly respected him.

Hilary was down before his uncle, and at once went to the library.

The greeting between godparent and godson was very cordial.

'I reproach myself, my dear boy,' the Commodore began, 'that I have lost sight of you so long. But you know what a rival you have in Chinese literature. A stygian pool, Hilary, if ever there was one, yet fascinating withal. And, besides, I thought a young man about town like you would be bored to death at being button-holed by an old pedant like me.'

'You don't look too much like a pedant or a bore,' said Hilary, with a laugh. 'I'm sure we are both delighted to have you here.'

Uncle Jeth was less demonstrative with his guest—that turning up at half-past six in the morning seemed to him an alarming trait in a man.

But there was no resisting the Commodore. He made breakfast that day such a meal as it had not been at Quarrendon for many a year. They had sat at table for an hour and a half ere old Jeth said aught about ringing the bell. He then left Hilary and his godfather together.

'Got any glass about, my boy?' asked the visitor a minute later.

'Glass! Window panes, do you mean?'

'No, my son, I don't mean window panes. I am a benefactor engrained, they tell me. It's a lie, of course; but I am so far a benefactor to exotics and that sort of thing that I always (when possible, you understand) smoke my cigars in the conservatory. Women object to it sometimes. God bless 'em, I don't mind if they do; they'd compensate a fellow for any hardships—eh, Hilary?'

'Don't know, I'm sure,' laughed Hilary; 'haven't had your experience, Commodore. But there is a diminutive greenhouse somewhere. I dare say it'll hold us both.'

It did, and very comfortably, too.

The two men made themselves much at home among the geraniums and begonias.

'And now,' said Hilary, when the Commodore had ended a rather desultory yarn about the state of society in the East, 'tell me, if you don't mind, if you have come across in your prowls among John Chinaman's scribblings anything I could turn into literary substance.'

'Anything, my boy! There's enough and to spare for the stock-in-trade of a dozen novelists. By George, there is! The country itself is just a lopsided romance. Take the history of the Fo emerald, for instance. Here, give me a light, lad, and I'll tell it you.'

The narrative was not so very engrossing to Hilary, but he saw literary possibilities in it.

He was, however, astonished to hear his godfather afterwards exclaim with tremulous earnestness, as he crushed the cigar to pieces between his two hands:

'I'm after that emerald, and, by heaven! I'll have it in these fingers before I die.'

'Oh! Then is it in England?' asked Hilary.

'Either in England or France. I've spent two years in France over it. Goodness me! the houses I've wormed my way into, all for the sake of that matchless jewel.'

'Really—now this *is* what I call interesting,' said Hilary, offering the Commodore another weed.

'It's an uncut emerald, you see, my boy, and it's much on the cards that some ignorant seaman got hold of it, and still has it knocking about among his china dogs and candlesticks over the kitchen fireplace. It was in the Summer Palace before we Europeans made a mess of the place; and it was gone afterwards. Who took it? and where is it now?—these are the questions I want to get answered. The second is a deal more to me, though, than the first.'

'I see! I begin to feel sorry for you, Commodore. The journeyings of Ulysses and the routine employment of Sisyphus seem to me to about match your labours.'

'Yes, I know it looks hopeless. But it will serve its purpose if it keeps me green in my enthusiasms when my hair is white—what there is of it. And, between ourselves, Hilary, you lawyers know how degraded our human nature is; that was the chief thing that brought me here. I want to see what relics of the sack your poor father brought home.'

'Little enough,' said Hilary. 'By Jove! if only you could find the Fo emerald here! It would set us Anjous on our legs once more.'

'I'm heartily sorry the family equilibrium has been disturbed, Hilary—heartily. You must tell me more about it. Meanwhile'—

'Oh, come along, you unconscionable monomaniac!' cried Hilary; and the other required no second bidding.

The curios were, as the barrister said, limited enough in number. A few ivories in the drawing-room, some gorgeous fans, and about a dozen superb vases completed the tale of them.

The Commodore seized upon the ivories with avidity, sounded them with his knuckles, poked his finger into all their crannies, and took particular measurement of them to ascertain if any of their cubic contents remained unaccounted for. The fans he turned out his lip at. The vases he treated with but little more respect. It was unlikely in the extreme that the Fo emerald had been allowed to pass into the hands of a potter, and be thus embedded in the unbaked clay.

'And that's all, is it?' inquired the Commodore, glancing about the drawing-room.

'Well, yes, I think so,' replied Hilary. 'I'm afraid there's no chance for us. Ah, by the way, there's the old joss. We mustn't forget that; though he's far too ingenuous an old buffer to be able to secrete such a jewel as that.'

'The old joss! Is it a silver joss, Hilary? Ah, now I remember it. To be sure it is. Let

me see it at once. I have my suspicions that the priests—— But there, I won't hamper you with any more of my speculations.'

'This way for the silver joss, Commodore,' said Hilary, opening a second door in the drawing-room. His den—the idol's temple—was at the end of the passage.

CHAPTER VII.



WHEN the Commodore saw the joss he was at once taken hold of by a flood of memories. He had been at the burning of that wonderful palace in Pekin as well as the late Lieutenant Anjou. He, like the lieutenant, had his spoils to show. Long years had passed since then—long, that is, when viewed in the mass, though all too short considered individually from the retrospective standpoint of each December the thirty-first. It was perhaps thirty years since he had fingered that silver image, and then he had made a jesting remark about it to his dead comrade which now instantly recurred to him. Little he thought then that the craze of his late middle age would be centred upon such trifles.

'Hilary, my boy,' he exclaimed, with a pensive expression on his good-humoured old face, 'I believe there is the embryo of a tear somewhere in the back of my eyes.'

'Then do keep it there, my dear sir,' said the barrister hastily. 'Dry it up at once. Life does not seem to me to supply an atmosphere congenial for emotion. The bracing, though far from sympathetic, winds of indifference strike me as better for a fellow to face and thrive in.'

The Commodore looked at his godson. His brow showed his amazement.

'Upon my word, Hilary!' he exclaimed—'so young (I speak by comparison) and so philosophic! Well, well, it wouldn't become *me*, my dear boy, to oppose your convictions. No doubt—never a doubt at all, indeed—they are much the same as my own at bottom. Poor old Hilary!—I mean your father, my boy.'

'Quite so,' said Hilary the second; 'and now, what can I get for you? Do you want to smash the old fellow to bits?'

'Oh dear me, no! I am not so far advanced in barbarism, even after my long sojourn amid barbarians.'

So saying, the Commodore put on his glasses and proceeded rigorously to examine the joss. He had a tape with him, of course. He would as soon have gone abroad without his boots as without this possible aid to the discovery that *might* be destined to make him a celebrity. With the tape he measured the idol, putting the results on paper. Hilary sat on the low window-sill and watched the proceedings, in-

terested but profoundly sceptical. He was thinking much more of the picturesqueness of his enthusiastic godparent while engaged in his singular enterprise than of the chance of any lucrative outcome of it. The idea germinated in him of making the old boy the hero of a little romance. There was certainly scope in it, if only he, with his untrained abilities, could do justice to the opportunity.

The Commodore indulged in a variety of ejaculations over his task. At one moment he seemed to be in the seventh heaven of expectation. That was when, after very close scrutiny of the joss's head, he cried out that there ought to be a cavity in the skull. But after the most minute inspection, he could discern nothing in the least indicative of trepanning. Then he became despondently profane in a mild way.

The results of his calculations put the finish to his despair.

'Another bubble pricked, Hilary!' he exclaimed dolefully as he looked up, thrust his glasses high on to his forehead, and held the paper towards his godson.

'Well,' said Hilary, 'I hope you'll be able to bear the disappointment. I'm sure I shall—no, thanks; I'm reserving my brain for other feats of intellect. I never was great at mathematics. Even Messrs Rise & Drop soon discovered that yesterday.'

'And yet I declare I had some cause to be more than commonly sanguine here,' mourned the Commodore.

'Why so, in the name of curiosity?'

'The emerald *was* in the custody of the priests. As far as I can tell, it never passed out of their hands. The thick-skulled idiots! Like as not one of them has it in his own mouldering eranium. That would have been the ideal hiding-place, and a modern surgeon could have put it there without endangering the patient's existence.'

'Bravo, Commodore! I beg to copyright *that* idea. If I don't write a book for boys on it, I've more ardour than talent—which is, alas! all too probable.'

'And besides,' continued the other, again bending over the joss, 'there is a slight discrepancy in the figures. It's deucedly slight, I'll allow. Speaking roughly, the thing ought to weigh a hundred and ten pounds eight ounces avoirdupois. It weighs a hundred and nine pounds fourteen ounces. The ounces may mean much. But I'm afraid I must give it up.'

'For heaven's sake, do! I can,' said Hilary, 'stand a downright blow, but something between a blow and a caress is unendurable. Tell a fellow definitely that the emerald can't be in "Old Ugly," and I shall be at ease again—as touching the joss, that is.'

'No, I'll not commit myself. But I've done with it. Take me away out of its sight; the

thing haunts me. Take me away, my son, I say.'

The Commodore either was or cleverly feigned to be inexpressibly irritated by the smug face of the idol.

But before Hilary could slide from his perch to do his godfather's bidding, Uncle Jeth's nose peered into the room.

'What is wrong?' he asked.

'Oh, nothing, uncle,' replied Hilary; 'only our friend here seems to have conceived as violent a hatred for that poor dumb curio as you used to have—perhaps still have.'

'It curdles my blood,' said the Commodore. 'Those ten ounces lie like tons on my imagination. I am stultified. Mr Anjou, you will think I am a fool, but I am serious—just at present. I shall be well again when I am elsewhere.'

'I can sympathise with you, sir,' remarked the master of Quarrendon solemnly; 'it is an accursed figure.'

For a moment or two all three stared at the miserable joss, which bore its execration with entire equanimity.

Then, with a laugh, Hilary broke the spell of silence.

'This,' he said, 'is awfully absurd. What do you say to a stroll about the garden, Commodore?'

'Delight'—began the visitor, but Uncle Jeth interposed.

'You must excuse Hilary, if you please—for a time at any rate. I want a word with him alone.'

'How, uncle?' demanded the barrister, much surprised. 'Those fellows haven't had the impudence to'—

'It is on family affairs exclusively,' said Uncle Jeth. His lower lip, Hilary thought, looked uncomfortable. That was always a grave sign in the old man.

'You can safely,' said the Commodore, smiling serenely again, 'leave me to my own resources for as long a time as you wish. I wouldn't for anything stand in your way, Mr Anjou.'

'Thank you,' said the master of Quarrendon.

'Where will you have your talk, uncle—here, or in the library?' asked Hilary when they had seen the Commodore stroll jauntily back towards the conservatory.

'Certainly not *here*,' was the loud reply, as Uncle Jeth glanced significantly at the joss.

Accordingly they went to the library. The old man shut the door, Hilary wondering no little at his conduct. But the barrister was soon enlightened.

'Tell me,' said Uncle Jeth without preamble, 'if there is the least justification for the rumour that has come to my ears that—that you have been making love to that Underwood girl.'

Hilary's face told him at once that the rumour was no lie. Indeed, it had reached the

master of Quarrendon in a very authoritative form. Mrs Tarver had decided that, as an appeal to Amy Grove and her husband against the alliance, the mere thought of which so annoyed her, had quite failed, there was no harm in trying how the squire might help her. She had done nothing on the Thursday but ponder how she might most forcibly arouse Mr Anjou's indignation in the matter. By Friday morning she had become convinced that she could do this no way more effectually than by a letter. She wrote the letter, therefore (it was an epistle for a museum), and told, because she felt it her duty, of Miss Amy's monstrous lures for the young squire, and of Master Hilary's unfortunate weakness. She wrote as if she was chiefly concerned for Mr Jeth's and Hilary's welfare, which could not but be prejudiced by such an improper marriage. Yet she also mentioned her fractured hopes about Amy and Ezra, her son, and made much of the evil disposition in the girl which could lead her, after first exciting the affections of one man, to throw herself coarsely into the arms of another, simply because he was the better catch of the two. All this was well adapted to make poor Uncle Jeth extremely wretched. He felt it the more bitterly because he was not now in a position to hold out any menace which might be expected to coerce Hilary, if his nephew should persist in his unwise infatuation.

'There is,' answered Hilary, 'every possible justification. I meant to tell you all about it yesterday, and you should certainly have heard it from my own lips some time to-day. But'—

Old Jeth lifted his brows wearily.

'Thank you,' he said in a sorrowful undertone. 'I am glad you did not mean to keep it from me until'—

'Until we were married! Uncle Jeth, I hoped you knew me better than that. What possible inducement could I have had to do that?'

'Quite so. You could have none—now. Perhaps you had better join the Commodore again. He would be glad of your company.'

'Oh, hang the Commodore!' exclaimed Hilary. 'Come, uncle, I can't bear to see you take it so seriously. She is an admirable girl, and'—

'Nothing *could* persuade you to the contrary, I imagine?'

'Nothing. I know her better than her uncle and aunt even. There is no hurry about it. When you see more of her you cannot but like her.'

'It is somewhat improbable that we shall become intimately acquainted.'

'Uncle Jeth! Surely you are not so much set on the world's canons of respectability. Is there so much in caste?'

'The Anjous have thought so hitherto. But

there, I repeat, Hilary, I do not blame you or say anything against it. I wished to know—that is all. And now leave me, there's a good boy.'

After persuasion Hilary consented to do so. Against his own hopes, he tried to make his uncle believe that Quarrendon was not in so bad a way as old Jeth thought it. The stocks would rise in value, and not only would the outstanding deficiency be wiped off, but cheques would come from Messrs Rise & Drop. Meanwhile he, Hilary, meant to do well in literature; he had two or three splendid plots in his head. He had not the remotest intention of marrying for many months—perhaps years. It seemed barely possible otherwise. In the interval much might happen. If the worst came to the worst Hilary would devote his life's work to the recovery of Quarrendon for the Anjous. Even if he married, their domestic *ménage* should be of the simplest, for Quarrendon's sake. And Uncle Jeth was not to brood and fancy himself an outlaw and worse because he had failed to remedy one evil by a second. As long as he, Hilary, remained single, they twain would live together. There were some very comfortable and convenient quarters in Bloomsbury, and when he married he was sure it would be Amy's second wish in life to make the old man as unmindful as possible of the past.

Hilary found the Commodore in the garden working very sternly at his figures about the silver joss. These, however, were pocketed with a certain guiltiness when the barrister appeared.

'Well, my boy,' said the old antiquary, 'nothing worse, I trust?'

'Oh no, not at all. I may as well tell you, though. I've engaged myself to a poor girl, and it's a source of trouble to the governor here. We Anjous just now seem a little off colour; but I'm not going to regard my little affair as in any sense an additional burden on our backs, corporately or as individuals.'

'Right, Hilary,' said the Commodore. 'I like that spirit. I must see her, but not now. In fact, I want to be off at once, my boy—no disrespect to your uncle, God knows! There are three other men in the south of the county whose names I've got down. I said I might manage to look over Mr Dubblethwaite's collection this afternoon, if I can catch the one o'clock train.'

'Oh, I say!' protested the barrister.

'Yes, I know it seems shocking to you. But, Hilary, I'm getting on in years, and I have a vast deal to do yet, even after the Fo emerald. And I'm no such treasure in a house. I thought the maid would eat me this morning—I really did.'

'Confound it all! Put off Dubblethwaite till to-morrow, or at least'—

'Take the night train—eh?'

'No; hang the night train!'

'It must be one or the other, my boy. My plans will all get disjointed else.'

'Honour bright, Commodore?'

'Honour bright. But while I think of it, I want you to oblige an old fellow by taking this bit of stuff just to help you a little in your new line. I'd be ashamed to offer it to you, Hilary, if you weren't my godson. You can, if your pride's very high, return it after your first success.'

The bit of stuff was a fifty-pound note.

'My pride,' said Hilary gravely, 'is very high, but it will not keep me from taking it on those conditions—and thank you heartily. There are reasons'—

'I know, I know, my dear boy. Don't talk about them. I don't want to hear them. You've made me a jolly old buffer, Hilary. And we'll consider it the night train—eh? And now I'll run away and write some letters to folks in the next county.'

CHAPTER VIII.



MRS TARVER had not found as much satisfaction in her letter to the master of Quarrendon as she had hoped to find. The more she thought about it, the more it seemed to her an act of disloyalty to her husband. Jabez had assumed that her objections to Amy's elevation had been got over. Her own conduct in reconciling herself with the girl before laying her head on the same pillow as his head seemed proof positive of it. Nor had she made any strong fight against his humour of castle-building while they twain lay awake, and he (honest man!) tried to foresee his Amy's happy future.

The dame went about her household duties in a querulous spirit. The maids marvelled at the quite exceptional shortness of her temper, and did their utmost to keep out of her path. Jabez pursed his lips and smiled when he caught her in the tail-end of any of her tantrums. He trusted these would soon run their course, and she would accept the inevitable with tolerable grace.

But the chief source of Mrs Tarver's discontent lay with Ezra. Something had come to the lad, and she could not fathom it. She put a leading question to him early in the day.

'Ezzy, the wench hasn't said "Nay" to you, has she?'

'What wench?' her son had retorted, by no means amiably.

'What wench? Save the lad! You aren't gallivanting after ten of 'em. What wench but our Amy, I'd like to know?'

'I haven't asked her again, and never shall,' was the frightful rejoinder. And after saying

these words, with the air of a murderer on the gallows-steps, Ezra had put a stop to further questions by turning his back upon his mother.

Yet, in spite of this blow, Mrs Tarver had determined to make the appeal to Hilary's uncle. She lay awake a long time on the Thursday, framing her sentences, and would, if she durst, have got up there and then, and written the letter while the sense of it was so hot in her. As it was, she was downstairs early enough in the morning to discomfort the maids, who were gaping at their ease and not working when she showed in the kitchen.

She managed the epistle, took a deep breath of satisfaction afterwards, and yet, when it was despatched so as to reach the squire about ten o'clock, she felt as dissatisfied as ever.

This state of mind in her was incredibly augmented by an informal visit from Farmer Gannett. At first she wholly refused to believe Mr Gannett's extremely broad innuendoes. She did not like Mr Gannett—thought him bad company even for her own man; much more, therefore, for one so innocent and pliable as Ezra. But she hated him with a downright hatred when that red-nosed person dared to imply that something ('just the usual,' Mr Gannett had said, with a vulgar wink) was up betwixt her eldest son and his only daughter.

'You're deceivin' of yourself,' said the dame haughtily. 'It ain't likely as my Ezra would look your way.'

At this Mr Gannett had laughed loudly.

'Well, missus,' he said, 'let me tell you, your own courtin' days ain't so far back but you can see a thing or two. Your Ezra, as you calls him, come and snook wi' me night afore last, and he never took his eyes off my Ally. The gal says he was "very kind" to her at partin'. We know what that signifies. And, as if that wur'n't enough, he drops in again last night too. He was pow'ful silent, I will say; but that's one of the tokens, ain't it, missus, if so be as he keeps his eyes (darned solemn' uns, too!) just gummed to his sweet-heart's face? And when Ally sees him out at gate, what does he do but stoop his head and say, "Alice, will you kiss me? There's no one cares for me but you." My Ally wur'n't backward; and so they stands at this blessed hour.'

'Goodness gracious! The Lord grant you're a liar, Mr Gannett!' exclaimed the thunder-struck dame. At first she had been mollified by the man's reference to her youth and her earlier charms; but the farmer's subsequent words made her oblivious of the compliment.

'Can't say as I'm more of a stickler for truth than most folkse, missus,' said Mr Gannett blandly; 'but I beaur't a liar about this. I'd scorn it. You can ax your son, and you can ax my Ally.'

'Your Ally indeed! Little trollop!'

There's no knowing what more Mrs Tarver, in her misery and wrath, might have said against poor little romantic Alice Gannett's character. But, though Mr Gannett could bear admirably to be called a liar, he declined utterly to have his daughter calumniated. Snatching up his hat, he made for the door. But before leaving he stood and spoke his mind.

'Mrs Tarver, ma'am,' he said, 'I've a sartain respee' for your powers in a house, but there my respee' ends. You're not a patch on your husband. He'd never say such a word about my Ally, who's as good a wench as ever behaved dutiful to her father and coy to the young men. I've never had much neighbourly tokens from you, ma'am, and I take pride I've never axed none. All I've got to say, lastly and in conclusion, about them young uns is this 'ere; your Ezra shau't set foot in my house again. I'll scorn him and you too, Mistress Tarver. You can put them words in your odds-and-ends basket and make bedcovers of 'em. I ain't a saint, ma'am, but my darter Ally's as good an' honest a little maid as ever gladdened God's earth. I wish you good-day, Mrs Tarver.'

The mistress of Underwood had a quiet attack of hysterics after this visit. But she was heroic enough to look the parlour door and dree her own weird. She dreed it chiefly with the aid of ejaculations and a certain eordial—reputed a potent brain tonic.

But when she removed the bar upon her liberty, and that of others—for some one was trying to enter the room—she was not best pleased to come face to face with Amy.

'Oh auntie, you're not well!' exclaimed the girl, with real sympathy.

'There's nothing at all the matter with me, miss,' she said petulantly in reply, 'but what you've had the doings of.'

Ezra happened to be in the passage, and to hear these bitter words. He at once stepped up to his mother, as poor Amy, on the verge of tears, stole away.

'Mother,' he said, 'you may as well know it first as last. I think that's a hard word to give Amy. She had a blow from me o' Wednesday night. I'll never forget that—never! It's took the manhood out of me. But'—

'What are you talking about, Ezzy?' cried the perplexed woman. 'Amy Grove a blow from you?'

'It's as true as I stand here.—Amy!'

'Yes, Ezra,' the girl answered reluctantly from the landing.

'Will you please come down for one minute?'

'You're wanderin' i' your mind, my son,' murmured Dame Tarver; 'or else it's me. I'd as lief it was that, I would.'

'I want you to tell my mother that it's true, Amy, as I struck you by the coppice o' Wednesday,' said Ezra, with a set expression.

'Oh Ezra!' whispered the girl, 'why will you talk about it? No one supposes you meant it.'

'But I did it. That's all I want mother to know.'

'You did it—yes; but you didn't mean it, and so it is just as if you hadn't done it.'

Dame Tarver sighed like a boiler letting off steam.

'Dear Lord!' she moaned, 'and it was Wednesday I were so unkind to the wench. Welladay! The Bible's truer than I ever thought it was in what it says about "you shall hev much tribulation i' the world." Leave me be, children; I'm all of a muddle. Sech a tangle I've got into as niver was! And all for trying to do the best for my own flesh an' blood!'

Ezra promptly obeyed his mother's bidding.

But Amy insisted on doing what she could for the dame's solace. It was not much. It consisted mainly in fondling her head as she lay back in her arm-chair emitting sighs, and in the use of many endearing phrases. There was also eau de Cologne. Amy made lavish use of this, and, it seemed, to some purpose.

Hardly had Mrs Tarver been coaxed back into the greater part of her accustomed good sense than she seemed like to have a relapse that threatened to be the worst of all.

There was a knock at the door, which both women recognised at once.

'It's Hilary!' cried Amy, with a joy that made her careless of this free use of the loved name before her aunt.

'And me in sech a state—and in my old cap!' exclaimed Mrs Tarver, looking the picture of despair.

'Oh, never mind that, aunty. Shall I go to him, and take him about the garden a little till you're ready? Do let me, dear aunty!'

'You can do as you will,' was the reply. It was given with no particular good grace, but it sufficed Amy.

Hurrying out of the room, she was just in time to intercept the maid who was about to open the door.

'I will go, Jane,' she said.

They embraced without heed of the birds that saw them from the elms and poplars round the front of the farm. There was no resisting the sweet invitation of Amy's lips and eyes. Hilary thought himself a happy fellow the moment he saw the sunshine on his sweetheart's pretty face.

'This is nice of you,' murmured Amy, referring less to the kisses than to the visit. 'Shall you mind if we stroll about outside first? The house is dreadfully untidy.'

Had Mrs Tarver heard this 'dreadful' untruth she would perhaps have taken it by the throat and risked the disgrace of being seen by 'company' in her old cap. But she did not hear it. She was busy before the mirror.

'No, Amy,' replied Hilary; 'I want you to come back with me to Quarrendon. I'll tell

you more about it on the way. You must dress yourself as prettily as you can—I'll say no more. You've got to win your way to my uncle's heart this day, my dear.'

Amy looked terrified—so much so that her lover burst out laughing.

'It's nothing so formidable,' he said, 'or I shouldn't think of asking it of you yet. Will you trust me that it is important?'

'But, Hilary, shall I be left *alone* with him?' asked the girl faintly.

'Oh dear no! I couldn't think of subjecting you to such a risk. I will stand close by you the whole time, and the big blade of my pen-knife will be ready to protect you the moment it is necessary.'

'You're laughing at me, Hilary.'

'To be sure I am. And you'll laugh at yourself, my dear, when you come to see what an absurdly timid little fawn you've been.'

'I shall not know what to say to him; and he will tell me what I know is the truth—that I ought never to have dared'—

Her lover's hand upon her mouth stopped her from finishing her sentence.

'Well, then, sweetheart,' said Hilary, 'we'll have a compromise. I'll stay to lunch here—it's your dinner, I know; never mind that; and afterwards we'll stroll back to the Manor casually and get it over. There's nothing to get over, though, I warn you. Circumstances have made your uncle a more significant man in the world's eyes than my uncle. That *ought* to make you bold.'

'But it doesn't, Hilary dear,' was the rejoinder. 'And oh! do, please, stay for dinner; and—if you could—but of course you can'—

'I can what?'

'Do be very nice with aunty. She's not herself lately; it's because of Ezra, and, and'—

'I see, Amy. Very well; I will be as fascinating with your aunt as I know how to be.'

'That is splendid!' cried the girl. 'And now I'll run and tell her you'll be here. And you can go and look at the puppies, and you'll find Uncle Jabez somewhere about there; and when I've changed my frock I will come out and join you.'

'Your programme sounds sufficiently attractive,' said Hilary as he pinched Amy's rose-red little cheek. 'I will follow it to the smallest detail.'

CHAPTER IX.



HE master of Quarrendon was harder hit by the intelligence of his nephew's entanglement (as he regarded it) with the niece of one of his own tenants than he had allowed to appear even when formally questioning Hilary on the subject. It was bad enough to be beggared. The

diminution of the family's good name was worse than beggary; and the old man had brought himself to such a mental strait that he viewed his nephew's marriage with a low-born girl like Amy Grove as nothing less than dishonour.

When Hilary left him after that humiliating interview Jeth Anjou sat and brooded, with his head bowed between his hands.

He had never been a very wise man. His affair with Messrs Rise & Drop seemed sufficiently to prove that. The solitude in which he had lived for the greater part of his adult life had not tended to an increase of his reason or common-sense. His unaccountable animus against the silver joss, if nothing else, seemed indeed to indicate a certain streak of madness in his composition.

And now, as he sat and in imagination beheld the desolation and ruin of the Anjous, the figure of that hateful little idol must needs come and dance before his vision. In a little while his fancy leaped to the amazing conclusion that this poor lump of worked silver was the evil genius of his house. Since its arrival at Quarrendon there had been no joy, no prosperity in the Manor. First, the lieutenant, its captor, had died soon after installing it in the village; then Hilary's mother had followed her husband; another brother of Jeth's had died shortly afterwards, though the doctors said there was no sufficient cause of death affecting him. Jeth's own mother's death at the age of seventy-three ought not really to have been laid to the charge of the idol, even by Jeth in his present insane mood. But he had been passionately devoted to the old lady, and he ascribed her death also to the common cause. Then an interval of many years had followed—joyless, monotonous years, during which Hilary was a schoolboy, an under-graduate, and later became a barrister. The silver beast had, he felt, been reserving its malignant energies for two or three crowning strokes of woe, and now these had fallen.

As he realised all this, and saw no flaw in the concatenation of infamies which might all be laid upon the head of the idol, poor Jeth rose and, looking twenty years older than he was, staggered to the library door.

A maid who was passing saw his face, and (though alarmed at it) had the courage to ask if she could do anything for him.

He retorted with a hard inquiry if Mr Parkinson was in the house.

'No, sir,' was the reply. 'He is out on the lawn.'

'Then,' said Jeth, with gleaming eyes, 'you may leave me. I want nothing—nothing at all, do you hear?' he added, almost frenziedly; for the girl had hesitated, to see if she could be brave enough to inform her master how ill he looked.

The maid fled incontinently and told her

fellow-servants a wild tale about the squire's words and appearance.

As for Jeth, he peered up and down the corridor with the stealth and cunning expression of a wild animal. Then, seeing nobody and hearing nothing move, he went on tiptoe into the drawing-room, and thence into the conservatory. He knew now explicitly what he was about to do.

There was a sledge-hammer in the greenhouse, with an iron head, weighing nearly six pounds. It had been used the other day to force the fastenings of one of the skylights.

When he had grasped this weapon, and pressed it to his bosom as if it were the fondest treasure of his life, the master of Quarrendon glided back into the drawing-room. Here he stood for a while with his back to the mirror, breathing fast. It seemed to him that he was about to engage in a personal encounter with the Evil One. This being so, it behoved him to accumulate his strength for the duel. He looked strange enough, to be sure, with his whitened hair so loose, and his face now beset by an expression in which spiritual hunger, bodily resolution, and a certain high dignity all had a share. But instinct kept him from turning towards the mirror; and no one was present in whose eyes he could see aught of the figure he cut.

From the drawing-room he went, without deviation, to Hilary's sanctum at the end of the passage.

As he entered the den he caught sight through its window of the Commodore on the grass outside. The man seemed to be approaching the house.

The sudden thought that his guest might come in and interfere with him if he were not prompt in his actions left old Jeth not a moment for hesitation.

He stepped up to the tranquil, ugly old joss, swung the hammer as high over his head as his arms would reach, and then, with fire in his eyes and preternatural strength in his sinews, he crashed the iron upon the idol's cranium.

Had the joss been quite solid all through, it is doubtful if it could have borne such a blow as this, which represented the concentrated loathing of a score of years.

But the joss was not solid; and Jeth struck it in its one weak point. There was a resounding crack, and the silver skull parted.

Another noise followed immediately upon the fall of one side of the joss's head—a double sound, in fact. The hammer dropped to the ground, and the master of Quarrendon did as the hammer did. It was as if in that tremendous blow the poor old fellow had exhausted his vitality.

The Commodore was the first of the household upon the scene. The room window was slightly open. He pushed it up and stood like one astounded. The hammer, the extended

form of his host, and the split idol had such an evident and yet extraordinary relation to one another. But he was a man used to sensational episodes; and the next moment he had rung the bell with a will.

The maids clustered in before the tintinnabulation had ceased.

'Fetch a pillow and some brandy!' cried the Commodore.

The prostrate man was soon set on the sofa in as easy a position as possible. It was plain that he was not dead; nor did the Commodore think that he, like the joss, had had a stroke. A doctor was sent for. It seemed that they had done all they could do, and in fact the squire's breathing quickly told them that he was on the high-road to at least partial recovery.

When he saw this, and saw also that the housekeeper was a much better hand with an invalid than he was, the Commodore made no scruple about examining the consequences of the sacrilege for which Jeth Anjou seemed to have paid so dearly.

'As I thought!' he cried, picking up the broken part of the head. 'It was hollow!'

The housekeeper looked at him rather reproachfully. This, however, was as nothing to the glance of positive anger with which she honoured him a moment afterwards, when the little gentleman, having snatched something from the inside of the residue of the joss's head, jumped into the air with a shout of:

'At last! at last!'

'Mr Parkinson, sir!' she exclaimed, 'please to consider'—

'Consider be hanged, my dear madam!' he retorted frantically. 'This isn't a time for considering. Thomas Parkinson, my friend, this is the happiest day of your more than moderately happy life. Look at that, madam—look at it!'

The Commodore bounded to the good woman's side and flourished before her face a lump of dull-greenish substance, yet not all dull, about as big as his thumb.

'I've my poor master to look at, sir. One thing at a time, if you please,' was the curt reply.

For all that, the woman could not keep her eyes from peeping at the article which seemed to have bereft her master's guest of his senses.

'It's only a bit of bottle glass, that I can see,' she added.

'Bottle glass! Oh, the sublime ignorance of the ignorant! To call this matchless jewel of Fo just bottle glass!—How is he going on? Oh yes, he'll do famously. Your poor master, Mrs — (I don't know what your name is, madam; but no matter)—your poor master never did a finer thing in his life than when he knocked himself senseless like this. Where's Mr Hilary?'

Old Jeth opened his eyes, as if the sound of his nephew's name was an elixir.

'I've settled it, Hilary!' he murmured, thinking of his brother.

'Come, come—this is first-rate,' cried the Commodore. 'Go and send Mr Hilary here at once,' he continued, addressing the housekeeper.

The woman went, confident now that all would soon be well with her master. She preferred not to attempt to understand the vagaries of her master's guest. When she had heard of the Commodore's apparition at Quarrendon at 6.30 A.M., she had reckoned up the visitor somewhat meanly. Later events had not elevated the antiquary in her esteem. Now she thought him little better than a lunatic. Nevertheless, she did not scruple to leave the squire alone with him.

'Jeth Anjou, old man,' said the Commodore, still in tones of abounding ecstasy, as he went on his knees by his host's side, 'you've done a rare day's work to-day.'

'I've meant to do it before,' was the reply, feebly but intelligibly. 'Oh, it's you,' he added, recognising the Commodore. 'Excuse me, sir; I'm not quite myself.'

'No; but you soon will be. Look at that, sir. Do you know *what* you've done? Providence or something else has made you the instrument for the recovery of one of the noblest emeralds in the world—at least it will be when it's cut. It's the Fo jewel, Jeth Anjou, worth tens of thousands; and it's yours, man, or Hilary's, which is much the same thing. Jeth Anjou, I'm proud of my godson.'

'I don't understand,' murmured the master of Quarrendon, trying to lift himself to his feet.

'Never mind; you soon will. Pulse improving! Oh, you'll do very well indeed, sir. What an inspiration it was, to be sure!'

To tell the truth, the poor squire was relieved when the Commodore was summoned away to luncheon. He, on his part, lay still, regaining his strength, and pondering the words of his guest.

Hilary, of course, could not be found anywhere within the precincts of the Manor. But he appeared ere his godfather had drunk more than three glasses of hock to the jewel that had, as it seemed, translated him above ordinary terrestrial existence and conduct; and with him was Amy Grove, looking so sweet and gentle under the combined influences of pride in her lover and bashful humility in herself that the Commodore's congratulations to his godson were as genuine as he could make them.

'Where is Uncle Jeth?' asked Hilary.

'Go and see,' was the mirthful reply. 'He's had a bit of an accident. It's nothing in the world to be nervous about, or you warrant I shouldn't be guzzling here and grinning.'

'What sort of an accident? and what have you to grin about, Commodore?' inquired Hilary, with very natural surprise.

'He knocked himself off his pins in knocking you into a for— But look here, Hilary; go and see him. He's in your room, and you can leave this pretty young lady with me.'

'In my room! What the deuce! Wait here a moment, Amy. There's nothing to be frightened at in the Commodore.'

Hilary hurried off to his uncle. The old man was sitting up, regarding the traces of his recent paroxysm. He by no means quite believed such of the Commodore's tale of treasure-trove as he had retained.

'That,' said old Jeth, pointing shamefacedly at the mutilated effigy the instant he saw his nephew, 'is my handiwork.'

'Well, how are you, uncle?' was Hilary's eager rejoinder. He paid no heed to the sundered joss.

'I am much as usual, Hilary, thank you. But I was certainly a little wild this morning. Will you forgive me, my boy?'

'Forgive!' laughed the barrister. 'You're sure it's nothing serious?'

'As sure as I can be. Have you seen Mr Parkinson? He has some queer tale about something or other.'

'Oh, he's half-crazy; that's my belief, uncle. The sun out East has touched his brain, poor old chap!'

'He found something in its inside, Hilary. I don't think much of it.'

'Oh, the dickens he has! Inside my joss, too? What's it like, uncle?'

'I think it's like glass—green glass. But he— Go and see it, my boy.'

Hilary did not tarry for a second invitation. A sense of coming profit had got hold of him. His heart beat fast as he hurried back to the dining-room.

Nor was this divine anticipation disappointed; for when he re-entered the room it was to be met by the Commodore arm-in-arm with Amy. The old fellow held the greenish stuff over the girl's brow as he exclaimed:

'Welcome, my dear boy, to the Fo emerald, the property of Hilary Anjou, Esquire, barrister-at-law!'

CHAPTER X.

THE Fo emerald was not quite so valuable, from the lapidary's point of view, as the Commodore had believed, in the height of his enthusiasm, it might be. But it was worth a good many thousands of pounds—quite enough to clear off Messrs Rise & Drop, and most of the mortgage on the Quarrendon property. There was, however, one mortgage that neither the Fo emerald nor the Koh-i-noor diamond would have obliterated with Hilary's consent. That

was the Underwood 'straddle,' as old Jabez Tarver called it.

There were the strongest reasons in the world, according to Hilary, who might be supposed to know something about equity as well as law, why Underwood should be established as a property for Jabez Tarver and his heirs male for ever.

To begin with, the barrister was not slow to reneatitate the history of the silver joss. Whose had it been originally, from the time it had ceased to be the property of the Chinese emperor? Whose but Jim Tarver's, whose wife had been his Amy's mother.

Therefore, the Fo jewel and the silver of the joss itself belonged, said Hilary, not to him as his father's son, but to Amy as her mother's only child.

This argument was used with excellent effect upon Uncle Jeth. The old man had, since his iconoclastic fury, been unusually quiet. It was as if he felt ashamed of his childishness, even though it had wrought such unlooked-for good. His introduction to Amy and the jewel had taken place at the same time. He had said not one hard word to the girl, nor looked one single disparaging look. For this Amy was incredibly grateful to him, and at parting she would have kissed his worn, thin hand if he had not withdrawn it in a sort of horror. Whereupon Hilary had suggested that a salutation of the usual kind would be much more to the point; and Uncle Jeth had kissed the girl and said, 'Heaven bless you both!' Such had been their first meeting. The good impression each had made upon the other deepened with the days; and on Jeth's part, at least, it was likely to be fostered by Hilary's reminder that the Fo emerald belonged to his sweetheart rather than to him.

This latter idea was, of course, repudiated stoutly by Amy when it was made known to her. It was also received with ridicule by Jabez Tarver, to whom Hilary mentioned it with due solemnity.

The good farmer of Underwood was in great spirits from the time of the discovery of the jewel. He could have had no stronger aid in discussion with his dame about Amy's suitors than this sudden nominal (as he regarded it, for argument's sake) accession of wealth to the girl.

'Was it likely,' he inquired, with considerable warmth, of Dame Tarver, 'that, the wench being now a rich young woman, they could try and squeeze her against her will into the arms of their son Ezra? What would the county say of them if they heard of it? No, no; it was just providential. The girl had been sent into the world to put the Anjous upon their legs again. And what luck in life could any girl of proper spirit desire above that?'

Mrs Tarver, with humility, said 'Yes' to her

husband's reasonings. From the morning when Ezra had admitted in her presence that he had given Amy a blow, she had begun to think herself deceived in her estimate of her own abilities, as well as in people.

But the old farmer was no sooner with Hilary or his niece than he would set to and guffaw at the absurdity of Amy's making any pretence to the thousands of pounds the emerald was to fetch.

'Lovey,' he said on one of these occasions to his niece, 'it's born nonsense. You ain't no more got a right to it than I has to the money won at the Derby by a loss as was foaled by a mare I thought nowt of, and sold to a man for a fi'-pound note. Where'd you hev been with your fortune if the old squire hadn't smashed "Old Ugly"? That's what I'd like to hev answered.'

As Amy answered this and all similar questions with a kiss, old Jabez had every encouragement to continue weaving reasons why his 'little gal' was to consider herself no more nor less than a pauper till she was Master Hilary's missus.

But Hilary himself did not look at it in this light. He declined to marry Amy until her uncle had consented to receive the title-deeds of Underwood—not as a gift, but in ordinary acknowledgment of the care he had exercised in the bringing up of the young heiress whom he wished to marry. As the girl herself and the old squire all joined issue with Hilary against Jabez Tarver in this matter (and even Dame Tarver confessed she liked to think of Underwood being 'their very own'), after many a pitched battle Amy's uncle confessed himself beaten. He never looked more miserable, however, than when, with a deep sigh, he accepted the parchments.

'I suppose,' he muttered, 'you'll be takin' the whelps an' all away now, Mr Hilary? There's a pow'ful deal more comfort in havin' a lawful straddle on a place than in bein' turned into a squire myself—all for nothink.'

'You just keep up your spirits, old friend,' said Hilary, laughing. 'It's not half so bad a business as it seems to you. And as for the whelps, if you'll let me, I'll leave them at Underwood in the old way—at least until I come down and settle at Quarrendon, which won't be for many a year yet, I hope.'

Hilary's intentions were much altered, in short, by this new turn in his life. He proposed to marry Amy without delay, and go back to London a benedict, and as determined a briefless barrister as ever eventually gained legal distinction in spite of opposing probabilities. For the joke of the thing he would try and woo old Worstenleigh, but he would not dine at that hospitable solicitor's table again unaccompanied by Amy, who might be trusted soon to behave in society as well as the best-blooded

young matrons of Mayfair. If Miss Worstenleigh despotically bade her father have no professional dealings with him, he would bear the rebuff.

The marriage was arranged, in fact, to take place at the Quarrendon church in less than a month from the day of the silver joss's downfall.

In the anxiety—joyful anxiety—of her preparations for it, Dame Tarver for a while lost sight of her little affray with Mr Gannett. She had other and much pleasanter things to think about than men like Mr Gannett. But she ought not to have forgotten the existence of Mr Gannett's daughter, at least if she was as positive in her contempt for the whole house of the Gannetts as she had made it appear to the head of the house.

Indeed, the news of the jewel came upon Underwood so suddenly that it absorbed all other interests. That was how she omitted to tell her first-born that he was on no account to be seduced by Ally Gannett's sly, designing looks.

Meanwhile the mischief—if mischief there was in it—was done.

Old Gannett went home in a huff from Underwood after his battle with Mrs Tarver, and said outright that he'd never, as long as he lived, have Ezra Tarver again on the hard wood chair in the kitchen with a pipe and his solemn young face. Alice lifted up her head and wept when she heard this. She would not, indeed, be comforted; so that at length the old man was fain, for the sake of domestic peace, to find a loophole by which he could restore happiness to his daughter without giving himself the lie.

'Look 'ee here, Ally,' he said; 'I'm main agin it, but what's got to be's got to be. And so you can philander wi' him in the yard, and I'll purtend as I knows nowt about it.'

As she could get no better concession from her sire than this, little Alice resolved to make the most of it. She met Ezra that very night under the moonshine, and shed many silver-tinted tears as she told how prejudiced his mother was against her; and she clung to his arm as they stood by the foal-yard gate, and looked up at him with such undisguised admiration in her bright eyes that Ezra could not but feel touched by it.

'Mothers and fathers,' said Ezra slowly, after due thought, 'make a many mistakes. They ain't always happy in their own marriages, and yet they make cocksure who is and who ain't fit for their children. I don't believe in 'em.'

'Nor me,' Alice had responded almost too eagerly. 'There's father, for instance. Poor mother took to drink, and yet father says there never was a likelier wench when they was wedded.'

'Oh, really,' said Ezra; 'I didn't know that your mother'——

'It was because of a complaint she had inside her; only that, Ezra,' the girl hastened to add.

'I'm glad to know that,' was the grave reply. 'It makes a deal o' difference, Alice; and so I say I think young men and young women, if they're just usually sensible, ought to be trusted to make their own choices.'

'Yes, yes, Ezra,' said the girl encouragingly.

'And so,' continued the young farmer, though hesitatingly, 'if you've no objection to our seeing each other like this'—('No, indeed,' murmured little Alice)—'we'll go on doing it. That's what I wanted to say.'

On this understanding the two met five or six times a week for a fortnight.

Alice Gannett greatly rejoiced to hear of the impending marriage, but she had tact enough to say nothing about it to her swain.

At the end of the fortnight, however, very rough weather set in. For three nights in succession the storms kept Ezra at home. This enforced absence from Alice inflamed his imagination about her. She had never seemed to him so desirable.

The fancy holding strong to the fourth evening, he then stole forth in the rain just to look at the dark house-shape that held his heart's new charmer. What happened is soon told. He found poor little Ally keeping tryst in a huge tarpaulin cloak. He asked her in surprise if she had faced the rain of the previous evenings. She said 'Yes' in a tone that seemed to imply that nothing could deter her from such sweet devotion to him. And then he put his arms under the tarpaulin and drew the girl to his breast.

'You *are* the vench for me, Ally!' he exclaimed. 'I've thought it many a time, and now I know it.'

Their two hearts beat in unison under the tarpaulin for half-an-hour longer, and then Alice Gannett went in and told her father that

Ezra Tarver had 'asked' her, and they had settled it.

It was very humble-pie indeed that Mrs Tarver was called upon to eat one day about a week before the wedding, when Amy had succeeded in persuading her to go with her to Mr Gannett's farm. But she ate it with fair grace upon the whole, and afterwards she was glad she had eaten it. Alice received her lover's parent with true respect, and showed her innumerable little attentions. She said, 'Oh, don't let her, father,' when the dame told of her wish to express sorrow for certain hasty words she had used to Mr Gannett at Underwood. But Mr Gannett was quite unwilling to deny himself the pleasure of seeing Mrs Tarver eat her humble-pie, and he did *not* stand in the way of her apologies.

'Well, there's one comfort,' ejaculated the dame when she and Amy were outside again; 'I can mek her into what I like to fit Ezzy. She's nothing but a lump of putty.'

Amy fancied her aunt's judgment was again slightly at fault, but she did not say so. The future might show if Alice Gannett were as plastic as putty.

All Quarrendon, and a good deal more of the county than Quarrendon, came to see Amy Grove made into Mrs Hilary Anjou at the parish church.

The Commodore ran down from London for the purpose. Though overjoyed at the routing out of the Fo emerald, he was for a while like a disestablished tradesman; his vocation seemed gone, and his mind felt the vacuum. But he was exceedingly cheerful, and he talked about an almost immediate return to China.

After their honeymoon at the famous Lowwood Hotel, by Windermere, Hilary and his wife were to begin life in earnest in London.

And old Jeth Anjou was left at the Manor House to live as he had lived these many years past, but without the burdens on his soul represented respectively by Messrs Rise & Drop and the silver joss.



A PERFECT CURE.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS,

AUTHOR OF 'THE CRUCIFORM MARK,' 'THE PRINCE AND THE UNDERTAKER,' ETC.

THE bell rang just as I sat down to lunch; and when Mrs Hall, my housekeeper, announced that a lady was waiting in the consulting-room, and wished to see me at once, I glared at her.

'Did you say I was at lunch?' I demanded.

Yes, she had said so.

'Then take her in the paper or something to read, please, and say I shan't be long.'

At that moment the consulting-room bell was jerked hard. It sounded as though something broke, and Mrs Hall bundled away, with ejaculations which might mean anything, but seemed pretty strong.

I poured out a cup of coffee, and then stuck my book up in front of me against the coffee-pot. Everybody knows, or ought to know, that a medical man isn't at home for consultations at one o'clock. If I rushed in at once this person would think I had nothing else to do. Besides, I was hungry, and my coffee would get cold.

I began to eat and read at the same time—a most reprehensible practice which I absolutely forbid among my patients; but I could not ignore the fact that a spirited dialogue, audible through at any rate one door, was going on in the consulting-room. Whatever was the complaint of my visitor, I was ready to pass the vocal organs as sound. Mrs Hall was coming back to me now, and the voice pursued her untiringly until she opened the dining-room door, came in, and closed it.

'You'd better go in and see her,' she suggested.

'After lunch,' I agreed.

'No—now, sir. She says she won't wait. You'll lose her, sir.'

'Let her go!' I said obstinately. 'A medical man is not at everybody's beck and call, Mrs Hall, even if he is paid for it. No doubt,' I added, with dignified modesty, 'she will be able to find some one else just as well able to advise her—if she will only go far enough.'

I think it absolutely necessary at times to remind Mrs Hall that medicine is one of the liberal professions, and must remain so in spite of the poverty of some of its members. There was a moment's silence, and then:

'Poor body,' said Mrs Hall; 'and she's saying she's so ill, too! But I'll tell her, sir, and send her round the corner.'

'So ill!'

I got up from the table at once; for ours, besides being a liberal, is a humane profession.

'Why didn't you say so before?' I asked, perhaps a trifle hotly. 'My lunch can wait, of course;' and I hurried away.

Never, before I went into my consulting-room that day and saw my new patient there, had I realised what a small room it was. The lady was roaming about it apparently in a very excited condition, and reminded me of nothing else so much as of a black panther in a box. So far did that likeness go that when, hearing me, she turned suddenly and stopped in the middle of the room, I stopped too, almost expecting her to spring, and keeping an attentive eye upon her.

'The Doctor Tregenna?'

Her smile was bewitching; her bow was grace itself; her voice sang rather than spoke. I do not consider myself sufficiently celebrated to be known as 'the' Dr Tregenna yet; but I have no colleagues of the same name so far as I know; and, remembering this, I attempted a bow worthy of the one I had just received.

'*Si parla l'Italiano?*' the lady suggested; and this I admitted in the same tongue modestly, using such diminutives as I could remember, with regard to the extent of my knowledge.

'The Signorina will be pleased to seat herself.'

I drew forward a chair, and at once involved myself in a discussion which severely tested my knowledge of the Signorina's native tongue. She was pleased to seat herself, but not in the chair which I placed for her, facing the light. She preferred the one from which I am accustomed to survey my visitors, with my back to the window, and it took some time and polite argument before I could convince her that a change was desirable.

'The Signor Dottore,' the lady announced, after this little matter was satisfactorily arranged, 'is a specialist upon the diseases of the throat and chest.'

This was stated with such conviction that I could only shrug my shoulders, with what I trust was an air of modest deprecation. I am

no specialist; but this charming young person, who, I now noticed, possessed that air of combined grace and dignity which is truly Southern, must have read a little note which I published a short time ago concerning the probable effect upon the respiratory organs of the extraordinarily high stairs in our city.

'The Signorina,' I said politely, 'has, I trust, no serious ailment of her organs of respiration?' I may say, in passing, that this dignified phraseology is not my usual style. It was simply forced upon me by a foreign language.

'Chi sa? Who knows?' said the Signorina gloomily. 'I spit blood.'

'Surely not!' I said hastily. 'The physique of the Signorina'—— But she shook her head as she coughed violently, with two inches of cambric and a foot or so of lace against her mouth.

'Ecco!' she said triumphantly when the paroxysm ended; and, upon closely examining the pocket-handkerchief held out for my inspection, I certainly saw a little fresh scarlet stain.

'At times my voice breaks,' she told me; and straightway it certainly did break, in a most surprising manner—from a round fullness of tone into a harsh whisper—and the Signorina lay back in her chair exhausted, and with a most melancholy air.

I own that I was concerned. However much absorbed a scientific man may be in his work, he cannot let distressed youth and beauty pass by unobserved. I hold, too, that the medical man is not justified in neglecting a case simply because the patient is attractive. I questioned her further, but could as yet make no definite diagnosis.

'I will now,' I told her, 'examine the throat and chest of the Signorina before giving her my opinion;' and I proceeded to get out my laryngoscope.

But at this point the lady rose and declared that any further consultation and examination must take place at her hotel. I ventured to hint, lest her purse might suffer through her ignorance, that this would mean a consultation and a visit, where possibly a consultation would be enough; but she was firm.

'Where one's health is at stake,' she was good enough to say, 'one can but put one's self in the *very best* hands, feeling secure that money is well spent in doing so.'

'The Signorina will do me the favour of reminding herself,' I protested feebly, 'that this estimate of my capabilities is her own.'

'The Signor Dottore does himself the greater injustice,' the lady told me, with a sweeping reverence; and, blushing at such flowery compliments, I agreed to call upon her at half-past four that afternoon, refused *pro tem* the proffered fee, bowed her to my door, and returned to my coffee and my book.

The name, Lucia della Casa, upon the card left by my new patient, although of a pleasant sound as I repeated it between gulps of coffee, gave me no information as to her history. I comforted myself by remembering that, in order to get that thorough grasp of her case which would be necessary for proper treatment, I must necessarily learn a great deal more about both the lady herself and her family. I interrupted my lunch to make a note or two of points which would need particular attention; and Mrs Hall, coming in later, found my lunch unfinished and my coffee cold—forgotten while I touched up a pencil sketch in profile, on a leaf of my case-book, of the Signorina.

'Engaged,' was the answer I got from the porter when, sharp at four-thirty, I asked for the Signorina Lucia della Casa.

'I am here by appointment,' I explained, and insisted upon sending up my card, with the result which I anticipated.

The Signorina would see me at once. I confess that my pulse rose above the normal as I followed the chambermaid who guided me. There would be a chaperon, duenna, or companion, of course, and in any case I was there professionally. Still, my pulse rose.

There was no chaperon.

When I was shown into the large sitting-room occupied by the Signorina there was only one person with her, and that was certainly not a chaperon, but a man.

He lay back in an easy-chair, with one leg thrown over the chair arm. He had forgotten to take off his glossy, curly-brimmed top-hat, which now balanced, to all appearance, upon a rather large right ear. On his sallow and somewhat haggard face there was a scowl; and of his moustache, which was as black and as glossy as his hat, one end twisted ferociously to his left eye, while the other drooped as limp as a rag.

I had time to observe this much, and to see that the gentleman's shirt-front and cuffs looked rather as though he had slept in them, before I was noticed. For the Signorina was roaming up and down the room, talking with great volubility and emphasis, while the other person watched her gloomily from the easy-chair.

The Signorina paused, breathless perhaps, and the person in the chair hurriedly seized the chance to speak, as though he had been some time waiting for it.

'Now, think, my dear girl'—— he began.

'Mai!' ('Never') asserted the Signorina wrathfully, and swinging round to recommence her promenade and her monologue together, caught sight of me.

'Ah! the Signor Dottore!' she cried triumphantly. 'Now the truth will be seen.'

'Will it?' asked the man with the curly-brimmed hat, surveying me dubiously. 'Well, my dear, seeing is believing;' and I straightway set him down as a rank outsider.

'Go!' said the Signorina shrilly, pointing to the door with a superb gesture of contempt. She certainly was magnificent, and I thought the fellow would collapse, but he didn't. He merely cried 'Bravo!' and threw out his right hand as though he were casting something at her feet.

'Now for your examination, doctor,' he nodded, turning to me; and I cannot conscientiously say that he seemed much abashed by the stare I bestowed upon him.

'A friend of the Signorina's?' I suggested; 'a brother?'

'*Mai! mai!*' wailed the lady; and the fellow chuckled insanely.

'Then, sir,' I said, with elaborate politeness, 'since my time is valuable to me, and this lady does not seem to think your presence essential, perhaps you will kindly leave us for a while?'

'For ever!' said the Signorina, stamping her foot; and the fellow chuckled again, though evidently angry.

'It's all rot!' he observed as he went to the door. 'Mind you, I have a right to take another opinion if I choose. We shall see what the doctor says. I shall wait for you downstairs, doctor.'

He jerked out these observations between the easy-chair and the door, to a running accompaniment of uncomplimentary epithets from the infuriated lady.

In the doorway he paused again and delivered a last shot. 'It's all that infernal macaroni,' he shouted; 'don't tell me anything else;' and with that he banged the door, and left me with the Signorina, who now sank upon the sofa and declared that such brutal scenes destroyed her utterly.

'A tyrant!' she told me, nodding towards the door, and laying her left hand approximately in the region of the heart, though a trifle low, which is the common mistake with ladies who have not studied anatomy. 'A slave-driver, Signor Dottore! An execrable wretch, *Dio mio!*'

'The Signorina should calm herself,' I suggested, 'or her throat will suffer far more.' And, indeed, I wondered at the force of excitement which could make the lady forget, for the moment, a malady which troubled her so greatly.

'The mind,' she sagely observed, 'is stronger than the body;' and then she composed herself, while I darkened the windows, and, rigging up my lamp, made a minute examination of the vocal chords, followed by a thorough investigation of a remarkably healthy pair of lungs.

When at the end I confessed that I had as yet discovered nothing to justify alarm, the Signorina was unaccountably distressed.

'But the blood?' she suggested.

Now, about her gums I had observed several small punctures and abrasions, and I said as much.

'The Signorina's teeth are magnificent,' I sug-

gested. 'Perhaps in using them vigorously, say upon a piece of hard toast, or a mouthful of fish containing a bone or so, she has scratched her mouth, and already forgotten it?'

But this explanation did not, apparently, satisfy the Signorina at all. In fact she grew gloomy, and frowned at me silently in a way which I found distinctly forbidding.

'I cannot sing to-night,' she declared at last. 'It is impossible, and you must certify that.'

It is perfectly true that up to this point I had not asked the young lady anything of her vocation. I intended doing so if necessary; but she might be a travelling princess for anything I had known—until I saw her glossy-hatted visitor.

'The Signorina should have been frank with me,' I observed austere. 'How could I know about the singing?'

'Everybody knows Lucia della Casa,' she assured me with child-like and astonished simplicity.

'That is understood,' I allowed, with a bow, and trust I may be forgiven the same, for I had never heard the name before in my life.

'Let us be clear,' I suggested after a moment's consideration, during which the lady wept into the sofa-cushion. 'The Signorina is engaged to sing to-night, and imagines herself unable.'

'I cannot! I will not! Listen how my voice breaks'—And break it did again most convincingly, and in a way that sent its owner off into a fit of hysterical giggling.

'As I have said,' I allowed, 'I can find nothing obviously at fault in the Signorina's throat or chest; but if she believes her voice will break like that this evening, why—it probably will.'

The Signorina giggled again, and I stared at her in dumb perplexity.

'Come!' I suggested; 'cannot I persuade you that your voice will be well to-night? It would be serious, I imagine, if you lost your engagement. Besides, there is—is there not?—a prospect of fines.'

'No matter! I cannot sing to-night. All the doctors of the city could not make me well to sing to-night. For ten guineas you could not!'

'I am not sure,' I suggested. 'If only I had my patient's confidence.'

'But, no!' the lady declared obstinately; 'I am ill. It is my great wish to sing to-night, but I cannot. I will give you ten guineas from my heart to make me well for singing to-night, but you cannot do it. My voice breaks always. It is perhaps hysteria?' and her voice broke again, and she threw herself back on the sofa and giggled again triumphantly.

'And you require a certificate?' I asked.

'Yes. So the penalty is less. But if you will not give it, I will find another who will; or I will refuse, and have no certificate. What is money without liberty? I will not be dominated by your Hopkinsons!'

'What are—or who is Hopkins?' I asked, just to make time.

'You have seen him,' she told me, nodding towards the doorway through which the glossy hat had disappeared. 'He waits for you, and will presently tell you that his name is De Vere. But if you wish to please me, and to make him angry, speak to him as Hopkins.'

Mr De Vere (*né* Hopkins) was evidently under the eloud of the Signorina's displeasure.

'There was something said about macaroni,' I remembered; 'the Signorina will do me the favour of explaining.'

The Signorina shrugged her shoulders contemptuously, at the same time making, with outswapt hands, a grand movement implying careless irresponsibility.

'Macaroni?' she echoed. 'What could that have to do with my throat? Does macaroni, or the want of it, produce blood-spitting and a throat like mine?'

'I have seen no such case on record,' I acknowledged. 'But what can this Hopkins have intended?'

'Ah! you call him Hopkins!' said the Signorina joyfully and irrelevantly. 'That is good! Call him always so.'

'And the macaroni?' I persisted.

'How can I tell? Do I look as one who would concern herself with macaroni? It is true' (after a pause) 'that, now I come to think of it, I seem to remember that macaroni was mentioned during rehearsal this morning. But I am an artist. My soul, the Signor Dottore will observe, is in my art, and I had forgotten the macaroni.'

'Nevertheless the point is interesting,' I persisted, 'to one who is no artist. The Signorina will have noticed the way in which this Hopkins referred to it. If the Signorina had forgotten, he had not. Can it be his guilty conscience?'

With my bow drawn at a venture I had evidently, in the Signorina's opinion, pierced the black character of the infamous Hopkins. She was enthusiastic—I had almost said she was affectionate; but, now that the lapse of time enables me to consider her conduct more calmly, I remember no more than that her behaviour was emphatically and delightfully of the South. The scientific eye, she assured me, which had attracted her attention upon the first instant of our meeting, had now diagnosed that villain Hopkins for the monstrosity he really was. Was it not *inferno*, she demanded, that a delicate woman, and an artist, should have to bear insults—brutal insults—far worse than blows, from such as he?

I agreed readily that if such were the case it was indeed heart-breaking.

'And the macaroni?' I observed. 'Now that the Signorina has had her attention drawn to the matter again, she may possibly remember

some of the details. That Hopkins evidently considered it of importance.'

The Signorina, so she assured me, considered it of no importance whatsoever. She had, she reminded me, entirely forgotten it. The artist has higher things to consider; and, besides, what is one petty insult, more or less, when one's life is a burden with them? The Signorina had often thought of quitting the stage altogether, and of retiring, for a pastoral life, to a secluded village that she knew of in her own beloved Italy. There, with a few kids—or lambs—as companions, and possibly some one who would love her and join her in a song at evening when the day's work was over, she would forget false popularity, hollow friendships, and the footlights—and would (this with bitter emphasis) eat macaroni in such quantities as she chose, and wherever and whenever she pleased.

Ah, that macaroni! She had returned to it, and this time, at my repeated entreaties, condescended to explain.

'The Signor Dottore knows,' she said, 'that to-night we play the grand opera *Fiamma*, and he knows, also, the part I take in it. I hold false modesty as the meanest of hypocrisies. There is no other in our company who can take *Fiamma*. I have said so when it seemed to me desirable to say so. Those who have thought, or rather who have pretended to think, otherwise shall see and hear to-night.'

As the excited Signorina flared out this prophecy, and, starting from the couch, raged up and down the room, she was a very fair personification of devouring flame hissing against a torrent of opposition. Watching her, I felt that I should be extremely loath, were I one of her sister artists, to fill her place.

And the macaroni? I said softly, hoping that my eyes expressed sufficient acquiescence with the Signorina's modest declaration of her artistic status.

'Ah! I will tell you. It was so. This morning those pigs and fools with whom I work were more fools and pigs than ever before—and in saying that one says much.'

I nodded my sympathy, and she went on.

'As for me, I was in grand voice, and all heard it to be so. I could see the other ladies yellow with jealousy, and I—oh! I was grieved for them, but I sang on—ah! I sang divinely, and all the common people, the shifters of scenes and such-like, who could come stood in the wings and listened, and also watched; and the others, when they saw, grew more and more yellow, and screeched like herons on the lagoons. Oh! I was grieved for them, and to the contrary I even said so, and offered her a lozenge, which she would not take. Some are so churlish, and she has bad blood, poor thing!'

The Signorina's sympathy for her rivals brightened her up tremendously. She even had to sit down and laugh before she could go on.

'Ah, yes, I know,' she said, holding up a finger to silence me. 'The macaroni. Well, I come to it—or it came to me;' and with that she went off into screams of laughter, which I fancied must encourage the despicable Hopkins, if, as I supposed, he was waiting outside.

'The foolish contralto,' she told me, 'who is always stupid and slow, and is fit for nothing but to stand like an ox and look over the foot-lights with those great silly brown eyes she is so proud of—she, being angry with me, grew more stupid. That vile Hopkins was enraged. His shiny hat, which I will some day sit upon, was like a black comet all over the stage. He was furious; but as for me, I grew hungry to desperation. And we had been half-an-hour longer than usual rehearsing, and that *maledetto* Hopkins would make that poor silly ox of a contralto return upon her steps, and do the solo again where she implores me to spare her lover—you know;' and the Signorina began to hum.

'The Signorina's voice,' I pointed out, 'improves with exercise;' and the signorina cast a somewhat discomfited glance at me, but made no reply, merely hurrying on with her story.

'So she with the eyes of the ox,' she went on, 'began her solo again. And I—poor I, who knew my part, and had sung to the delight of all—I was supposed to stand and listen and do pantomime. It was absurd! You agree that it was shameful!'

I remarked cautiously that some one must have been to blame.

'Of a truth!' said the Signorina contemptuously. 'Now listen!' and I listened, while, throwing herself back upon the couch and emphasising every point with both hands, she proceeded with the story of her persecution.

'You must know,' she told me, 'that our labours are gigantic. Body and soul are tormented, are torn by the passions of our rôles. As for me, I am fit for nothing after a rehearsal until I have eaten. We artists, too, have our fancies, our sentimentalities in such matters. Mine is macaroni!'

'Ah!' I ejaculated.

'Ah! as you say,' nodded the Signorina. 'Yes, we are arriving. It is my custom, then, to have a small plate ready prepared in my dressing-room. After a representation or a long rehearsal I fly to it, and eat like a princess, ravenously, while my maid does her work. Is it not ravishing, boiled, with plenty of Parmesan cheese?'

'Not a doubt of it,' I agreed.

'You love it? We will eat it together, as in Naples, when you have cured my throat.'

I bowed my thanks, while the vivacious Signorina went through a lively pantomime of picking up long strings of macaroni with her fingers and dropping them into her mouth.

'Where was I?' she demanded. 'Ah, yes! There we were, by this time three-quarters of an

hour late, that poor silly Emilia begging me, as though she were half-asleep, to spare her lover, while I stood frantic and thought only of my macaroni. "Wake up!" that brute Hopkins told her at the end. "We must have that over again;" at which she wept; while as for me, looking about me for sympathy, I caught sight of my maid.

'Oh, it was terrible! She dared not come on the stage; but from the side she made signs to me despairingly, for she knows how I love my macaroni.

'It was drying to sticks; she told me so, plainly. It had been ready, oh! half-an-hour.

"Was it spoilt?" I asked her in desperation, with my eyebrows and nose—so—you know.

"No, not yet. But another ten minutes!"

"Bring it to me here," I told her.

'The Signor Dottore should have seen the girl's face. A Neapolitan like myself. She was horrified! But, Santa Maria! she knows it is better to anger any one else than I, and she disappeared. Oh, how I longed for it! And why should I not have it? It was absurd. I had finished, and there was an end. Would she bring plenty of grated cheese? I wondered. That is half of it; and then she came—I could see her over Emilia's shoulder, the plate all hot and smoking, the macaroni piled up in great white snakes, the cheese thick upon all. Still she did not come on. She was afraid until I frowned at her. Then she brought it forward just as Emilia began, "*O quanti giorni!*" How many days, how long!" sang Emilia, and then stopped short. She had seen the plate, and—well, I suppose she was angry.

"Go on," I told her with my mouth full. "Never mind me!" But—would you believe it?—everybody shrieked, and the silly fool burst out crying. As for Hopkins, that double donkey, I am wrong; he did not laugh. When he turned and saw what was doing, he jumped across the stage and sent my plate and my beautiful macaroni spinning into the orchestra. The plate hit the bald head of the 'cello; and one of the fiddles had most of the macaroni in his face. How they swore! It was most terrible!'

'And you?' I asked.

'Oh, as for me, I am different: it is understood. I was cold—superb!'

"Good! Signor Hopkins," I told him when they had stopped laughing, "I have been fearful for my throat these last three days, and now it is suddenly much worse. I shall consult a doctor; but I fear I must absent myself to-night. *A rivederci!*" and I came to you.'

The Signorina leant back, exhausted by her dramatic recital, and murmured that the coarse brutality of these people, with whom her art compelled her to consort, was perfectly appal-

ling. As for me, I endgelled my poor brains desperately, while the ten guineas which the Signorina had defiantly offered for a cure seemed to dance and diminish before my eyes.

'Then it *is* the macaroni!' I said.

'*Chi sa?*' she answered carelessly. 'Who knows? It is true that my throat became immediately useless after the episode of the macaroni. Perhaps it was stage-fright! Perhaps it was hysteria produced by the brutality of that Hopkins. Do not forget, I pray you, to call him Hopkins when he interviews you presently!'

'He will be wondering what has become of me,' I said. 'Supposing I leave you for a few minutes, and have a chat with him?'

'As you please,' said the Signorina, with a fine air of indifference. 'But give him your certificate, and tell him, from me, it is secure that any further violence will make me voiceless for the season.'

'We must talk about the certificate again, later,' I decided. '*A rivederlä*;' and I left hurriedly to avoid further argument.

I went slowly along the hotel corridors and down the stair, wondering what I could do. The glossy hat was not, as I had anticipated, just outside the door. This, I heard later, was because the wearer of it had been found by the hotel manager trying to follow our conversation through the keyhole.

A waiter told me, with a grin, that the theatrical gentleman had said he would wait for me in the coffee-room; and there I found him, quite as excited as the Signorina, and far more desperate. He was chewing an unlit cigar viciously; his hat, which I began to look upon as a sort of mental barometer, was jammed firmly down over his eyes; telegraph forms were scattered all about him—though what he was trying to do with them I cannot pretend to say.

When he saw me he strode forward with a wild attempt at self-control.

'Come, Doctor, you have been a long time! Our patient is touchy, isn't she? But you've brought her to her senses. Sit down here and tell me all about it now. Waiter! a bottle of Heidsieck here at once.'

He glared round him, and, seeing no waiter, sprang across to the fireplace and pressed the electric button.

'Infernal toy!' he muttered viciously, and stood with a thumb upon it until the door flew open. I could see quite well that he was longing for a bell-rope, which he might have torn down first, and sworn at afterwards.

I didn't want Heidsieck or anything else while this matter was undecided, but I said nothing, and sat quiet until it came, when my *vis-à-vis* tossed off two glasses without noticing whether I touched mine or not, and then faced me with a desperate air, and both elbows upon the table.

'Well?'

'I can give no opinion yet,' I told him.

'No opinion! No opinion!'

He pulled out a great gold watch and held it up to me.

'In two hours she must be at the theatre,' he declared. 'In two and a half hours she must be ready to come on. No opinion!'

I shrugged my shoulders, wishing most fervently that he would be quiet and give me time to think.

'Come,' he went on, 'it's all that—macaroni. She's as strong as a bull, with a throat like a foghorn. What does she *say*? Tell me all about it—every word.'

'I'm sorry I can't do that,' I decided. 'For one thing, it would take too long; and for another, professional etiquette won't allow me.'

'Professional etiquette!' The man wanted to swear, but could only gasp and choke. 'Do you know who I am?' he demanded. 'I am De Vere, the Impresario!'

'Can't help it,' I told him. 'If you'd only give me time—'

'Time!' He was frantic. He rose from the table, and pulling his hat down on to his nose, upset his chair, and rushed at the bell again.

'I'll have another opinion,' he declared between his teeth. 'Waiter, the Directory. I'll see if there's a decent medical practitioner in this infernal city.'

'Very well, Mr Hopkins,' I told him angrily, 'if you can't find one in the Directory I shall be happy to give you some addresses.'

'Collusion!' he snarled, and, fluttering over the leaves, ran his finger down a page, threw down the book, and made for the door, to which I followed him.

'I'm going upstairs again,' I explained; 'whoever comes back with you will need to see me.'

To this he replied nothing, but, flying frantically into the hall, cannoned against the solid form of the man who had been in my thoughts for the last five minutes—my old chief.

The shock was severe, and each man staggered a different way, but the impresario was the last to recover his footing and his wind. By the time he had done so my old chief had recognised me and shaken hands, and I had jumped at the ghost of a chance which offered itself.

'Give me a quarter of an hour,' I entreated the panting Hopkins. 'Get back into the coffee-room, there's a good fellow, and finish that champagne. I give you my word that if, in that time, I don't know how to settle it, I'll come and tell you so.'

'Ten guineas—fifteen—if you bring her to her senses,' groaned the unhappy man; and with that I pushed the poor fellow away towards the half-bottle or so still left upon the table, and, catching my astonished chief by the arm, implored him to give me five minutes.

Behold him, then, seated in a corner of the hotel drawing-room a moment later, and chuckling most openly and unsympathetically at the hurriedly-told story of my difficulties.

'I can't find a thing the matter with her,' I acknowledged at the end.

'I believe you,' the old fellow agreed, grinning at his finger-nails, upon which he spends a tremendous amount of time and attention. 'What are you going to do, my dear fellow?'

'Upon my word, I don't know, sir. I can't give her a certificate, that's certain; but I don't want to get her into trouble, you know. Besides, that impresario chap must have been a brute, though he's in such a hole now that one can't help being sorry for him too.'

'Ah! you're altogether too sympathetic. Homely sort of girl, I think you said?'

'Not a bit of it,' I declared impatiently. 'She's a most beautiful creature.'

'Lord, you don't say so!' chuckled the chief. 'Still, my dear Tregenna, I'm sure that isn't affecting your procedure;' and he grunted away at his confounded finger-nails till I felt hot all over, and would have had a row if he weren't such a good fellow.

'Come away and pay a call with me,' he said at last. 'You're not the only man to be smiled upon by *prima donna*. I'm here to see one formerly of the same sisterhood—an old friend. She knows the ropes, I fancy, if any woman ever did, and it will please her to be consulted. Go and extort another quarter of an hour from our frantic friend in the coffee-room. Tell him he owes me that for not charging him with assault.'

I went, and found that M. De Vere had finished the champagne, and was now sitting, watched closely by an anxious waiter, glaring fixedly at a blank wall, with both elbows upon the table, and both hands clutched at his hair. It wasn't difficult to get the extra time granted.

'Too late for anything else,' he groaned. 'Ruined by a woman's vanity, sir!' and he banged his hand down upon the table as I left.

I threw him a word of encouragement over my shoulder in leaving, and was interested to see that the waiter, with a preternaturally solemn face, was quietly removing a knife that happened to have been left upon a plate at the next table. He evidently thought the case a bad one.

'My friend,' said the chief as he led the way, 'is out of all this sort of thing now, and only here for a night, I fancy. She always sends us a wire, though, when she is going to pass through, and then my wife sends me along to have a chat and make her dine with us. She's resting on her laurels. She's got plenty of 'em, and professes to take no further interest in such mundane affairs now. But we shall see. I shouldn't be surprised if she knew some-

thing of your heroine, unless she's very new indeed. By-the-by, what did you say she's called?'

'Lucia della Casa,' I told him.

'Lucia!'—The old man stopped upon the stair and glared at me in stony silence.

'Who?' he asked presently.

'Lucia della Casa,' I repeated. 'Do you know her, sir?'

'Know her?' He echoed my words as if he scarcely understood them, and then muttered something about old fools and the survival of the fittest, which I didn't at all understand.

'Oh, yes, I've heard of the girl,' he acknowledged presently. 'Come away, man; we'll see what can be done with the lussy;' and a minute later I was being introduced to his friend.

Now, whereas the Signorina was a study in black and ivory, and aggressively young, this lady, middle-aged and inclining to plumpness, was a lively blonde.

Both, however, when they spoke or moved, seemed to have the same trick of taking up all available space; and when this charming lady glided across the room to welcome her old friend, her welcome, though I am certain of its sincerity, was thrown out as if addressed to a great audience.

The first few minutes were filled with inquiry and reminiscence, mostly in Italian, though the lady spoke to me, and spoke fluently, in English.

Did that accursed vocal chord ever trouble her again? No, the Diva (so the old chief addressed her, half in play, half in earnest) had never been troubled by it again, thanks to her dear friend's care. And he? How had he been? and how was the dear fiddle? And, turning to me, had I heard the fiddle, the dear doctor's fiddle? and was it not charming?

I *had* heard that fiddle, played as it was for the benefit and delectation of the old gentleman's favourites. I managed to avoid giving an opinion as to its charm.

'Ah!' he reminded her, hugging his knee and beaming upon us both, 'Tregenna has never heard it and you together. That's when we're at our best, Diva!—the fiddle and I.'

'Flatterer!' The Diva shook an admonishing finger at him. 'Ask your wife whether, if I stay over to-morrow night, I may run in for a quiet dinner and a little music? To-night I dine early, to hear *Fianina* and judge if things have changed since my time.'

We two men looked at one another, alert on hearing this, and straightway we laid my perplexities before her.

'I know of her!—the Neapolitan!' the Diva told us when the story was ended. 'The mad thing. She is a young tigress, I have heard. But what a child! What can I do, however?'

'If you could advise us,' I pleaded. 'A woman knows how to persuade a woman. I

can't give her a certificate. If you, perhaps, spoke to her'——

'Spoke to her!' The Diva swore softly and musically in Italian. 'It would be honey to her to have me petitioning at her feet—and honey and wine to refuse me'—— Then turning to the chief, 'You have not seen her? She cannot be ill!'

I couldn't see the logic of this argument, but had no time to consider it closely, for the chief, hurriedly explaining that he knew no more than I had told him, entreated the Diva to look upon the difficulty as his own, and to help us for the sake of old friendship.

It almost seemed as if she had forgotten us. She did not listen. She did not seem to hear. Her gaze roved slowly down the long room, the pupils of her eyes dilated. She talked more to herself than to us.

'I would like to hear her sing it—that Neapolitan!' she muttered. '*Dio mio!* How they terrified me with their noise that night, when I sang it first in Milan! Can she take the high G rightly, I wonder?'

'Not as you can, Diva,' the chief declared; but she never heard him.

'Oh, the roar,' she went on dreamily, 'and the clapping! Why, a man told me, twelve months after, that he bruised his hands that night, and later got tipsy drinking my health, poor fellow! Never, never again.'

She moved across to the piano, and, striking a chord, seemed to let her voice swim away up till it floated on the upper G, stayed there, and then died slowly away. The very simplicity, the ease of it, was exquisite. We men stood reverent as we might have stood in a cathedral. Then, suddenly, while the Diva stood with one hand upon the keyboard, half-smiling as though she still heard salvos of ghostly applause, the old man snatched at my arm and dragged me across to her.

'I have it!' he shouted. 'She's cured! The hussy's cured!' and proceeded to explain.

Ten minutes later the crushed and humbled Hopkins, whose hat by this time lay battered and dusty in a far corner of the coffee-room, listened with a sardonic smile, as of a man who no longer hoped or feared, while I cautiously suggested the possibility of a cure for the throat of the charming Signorina.

'You heard my offer,' he told me, with a hollow groan. 'I could double it without your being a penny the better. I know the vixen! All the men in all your universities, colleges, hospitals, and—and *lunatic* asylums couldn't make her call herself cured to-night.'

'Not all the men, I dare say,' I admitted, for I too felt humble. 'But what if we try a woman?' and before I had finished my explanation the curly-brimmed hat was carefully brushed and balanced at a miraculous angle,

hanging, apparently, upon some three hairs, while the desperate expression upon the face of Mr Hopkins showed that hope and fear once more had possession of his soul.

It was only a few minutes later that I went back to the charming, but by this time impatient, Signorina.

'Does it take three-quarters of an hour,' she demanded haughtily from the sofa, 'to tell that *ladrone* that I cannot sing? Or is it, Signor, that you cannot persuade him, and that I must get additional evidence of my miserable condition?'

I watched the impetuous but fascinating young person closely while I answered. I spoke slowly, weighing my words, answering carefully, anxious that she should not misunderstand through any slip of mine in a foreign tongue.

'Hopkins is convinced,' I told her. 'He is conquered. Indeed, I think that he has a kind heart and is sorry for the Signorina.'

'Sorry!' The Signorina laughed tempestuously, with appropriate gestures of cynical incredulity. 'I can well believe that he is sorry,' she explained, 'but not for me! Never for me! It is for his miserable self that he repents. It will touch his pocket, where his heart lies. It will empty it!'

I shrugged my shoulders and threw out my hands to express my utter inability to judge, and then I sat down at the table, begging my patient's careful attention for one moment.

'I am about to write a prescription,' I told her. 'It has had miraculous effects in similar cases. At my pressing request Hopkins has consented to wait one hour to see its action, before he concludes his arrangements for to-night.'

'He should not,' the Signorina observed negligently. 'It is now,' consulting her watch, 'nearly half-past five. Even that fool Hopkins could tell you that the opera, say of to-morrow night, could not take the place of to-night's in five minutes.'

I was now writing the prescription, and I finished doing so, rang the bell, and gave my orders before I answered the last remark. Perhaps ladies troubled by sore throats produced through excitement may like to see my prescription. I trust that I do not risk censure for infamous professional conduct if I offer it gratis:

R. Tincture Asafoetida ʒiss.
Ag. ad ʒiss.

Sig. A tablespoonful to be taken every half-hour if necessary.

The Signorina was openly sceptical of its merits.

'If it annoys me,' she explained, 'I shall not take it.'

'Then I cannot give the certificate,' I pointed out, 'and the contract will, I suppose, be considered broken. I am aware that I am using severe remedies; but the time is so short.'

The Signorina then repeated her remarks about

the time necessary to prepare for another opera, and now I was free to relieve her mind on that point.

'They will play *Fiamma*,' I assured her, 'in any case.'

'With *Fiamma* left out!' she laughed. 'How truly British!'

'No, with a substitute, I am told. Probably a poor one, one would suppose. There can be only one *Lucia della Casa*,' I told her, with a bow. 'But Hopkins tells me that another lady who happens to be passing through the city has consented to do her best, if the Signorina does not feel restored in an hour. Also Hopkins will accept my certificate.'

The Signorina gazed, I might almost say glared, at me incredulously.

'Impossible,' she decided; but I, shrugging my shoulders, in which performance I was becoming expert, through such frequent exercise, declined to offer an opinion upon the impossibility.

'So he says,' I assured her, and then asked permission to write a letter or two while waiting until the miraculous mixture should come.

'The Signorina can now compose herself,' I suggested, 'her mind being at rest concerning my certificate; I shall not hesitate to give it if my prescription prove powerless.'

I then settled down at my letters; but the Signorina, obviously, had a difficulty in following my advice and example. She roamed about the room, now staring out of the window, now poking the fire; and very often, as I felt quite easily without looking up from the paper, she watched me, once or twice making odd little noises in her throat, as if clearing it.

The medicine came, and the sentiments which she expressed on tasting it would certainly have been called 'free' if uttered in a Northern tongue.

I was in conspiracy, she assured me, with that miserable Hopkins to poison her. He, or I, might take the rest. She most emphatically would not. It would be quite unnecessary—useless, in fact—for me to wait in the expectation of seeing another drop of that infernal mixture (excuse a literal translation!) pass her lips.

As for me, I trembled, and only stood firm through sheer desperation.

'It is my belief,' I said meekly, 'that the Signorina will find herself so far benefited by this one dose (which I admit is atrocious in taste) as to be ready for the second when I offer it. In any case, I am in the middle of a letter. May I throw myself upon the hospitality of a Neapolitan lady, and beg leave to finish it here, where I have begun? Or shall I ask for the use of the office-room?'

The Signorina sulkily gave me to understand that, provided I quite understood her determination with regard to further poisoning, I might consider myself at liberty to finish my letter

wherever I pleased; and, bowing as grateful an acknowledgment as I could manage, I turned again to my writing, with an invocation to Orpheus or whatever musical divinity happened to be within call.

It was perhaps ten minutes later that I, listening with all my ears, realised that the critical moment for the cure had arrived. Somewhere, within hearing, some one had begun to sing!

The Signorina, occupied at that moment in making a most vicious attack upon a lump of coal, did not at first pay any attention. I myself bent more closely than ever over my letters, and persisted in writing; but what I wrote will never be read by any one but myself.

'Is it not hard,' asked the Signorina querulously, punctuating her sentence by vigorous stabs at the fire—'is it not hard that we artists should be at the mercy of these pigs of speculators—these Jews, who look upon the voice, the figure, the fine feelings of the artist merely as merchandise; only preferable, say, to bacon or to cheese, because rarer, and therefore to be sold at a higher figure?'

I held my breath, listening, not to her, but to the voice that was now trying its wings gently, in little flights, somewhere below us. The Signorina, without waiting for any reply, bent over the grate, and darted a thrust at the biggest lump of coal that shivered it to atoms. 'Is it not hard?' she demanded, rising and facing me; and just at that moment, while she waited for my reply, the voice broke into recitative:

'I am the Flame,' it cried. 'I am Fire. Death to him who embraces me, in hate or in love.'

There were a few seconds more of silence—such silence as comes before thunder—while my pen moved mechanically across the paper; and then:

'What is this?' asked the Signorina from beside the fire.

'What is what?' I replied cautiously.

'This noise?'

I raised my head and listened with an air of innocent indifference.

'Some one singing?' I suggested. 'It sounds pretty, doesn't it? The music is new to me;' and I bent over my letter again.

To this the Signorina said nothing; but, stealing a side glance at her, I saw that she stood listening upon the hearth-rug, erect, tense, with the poker still gripped in a hand of which the knuckles showed prominent and white.

Heavens! if she should turn furious, and use that poker upon me! I knew the temper of these Southern women. Later, she might weep bitterly over her mistake; but how should I profit thereby? Presently, however, she put down the poker, and going quietly across to the

sofa, sat down and listened. As for me, I wrote, and wrote, and wrote, feverishly, unceasingly, glancing now and then at my watch, which lay upon the table, and longing for the end. And, all the while, that mocking voice rose and fell, soaring, sinking, while the Signorina sat and said nothing.

When, at the appointed time, I rose and offered her the second dose of medicine, she took it almost unconsciously, and did not speak until I returned to the table.

Then she said, 'That is *Fiamma*!'

'Is it?' I asked, with a show of polite interest. 'I fancied it might be. I confess that I begin to doubt whether the Signorina will be able to sing to-night. As for me, I am no connoisseur. The Signorina can judge whether her part will be passably taken.'

The Signorina vouchsafed no opinion upon that point. She only said 'Wait!' grimly, and sat like a statue, while I tried to write. The voice still wandered on. Sometimes it stopped for a moment; sometimes it turned to repeat a phrase before scaling fresh heights of success. But always it gave me the idea of a careless bird, singing at ease and out of sheer delight; and always the still figure upon the sofa held its peace; always, if one may use a term so hackneyed, the atmosphere grew more electric.

At last came the crisis.

There was a pause, and my unwilling hostess rose swiftly, and, crossing to the window, gently pushed it open.

'The throat!' I cried; but she silenced me with a wave of her hand, and stood alert, shivering, on the rack for what should follow.

Then rose that voice, triumphant, scornful, surpassing itself:

All that fierce Fire is—that am I;
Men 'neath my kisses faint and die.
Ask not my birth, nor whence I came,
Nor whither flying: I am Flame!

Lo! if a woman—

The voice hesitated, faltered, and stopped. Probably the words had been forgotten; certainly in the music there was nothing beyond such powers. The verse was started again, but never finished by that singer, for her chance was gone.

The Signorina, amazed, struck dumb by the audacity of any one who would dare to sing her song in her hearing, had listened as though petrified. But when the pause came the spell upon her was broken. Throwing the window

sash up to its highest, she leant out, eyes flaming, hair streaming, a veritable fury, and finished the song herself:

Lo! if a woman cross my path,
Straightway she reels beneath my wrath;
Over her body I go by.
All that fierce Fire is—that am I!

Those who have fire for enemy,
No happy ending theirs shall be;
Bare to the winds their bones shall lie.
All that fierce Fire is—that am I!

When, a few minutes later, the dubious Hopkins timidly looked into the room, he found my patient in floods of tears, her face buried in the sofa cushions; and he joined me in my heartfelt congratulations upon her recovery, due, as we carefully insisted, to the marvellous efficacy of my prescription. There was not a word said about the wonderful and invisible substitute. All reference to her was carefully avoided, and in this I incline to think that the still trembling Hopkins was only prudent—for such an understudy is not always available.

That night I was invited to occupy a box at the performance of *Fiamma*, with the chief, his wife, and our good fairy. That night there was enthusiasm among all the artists, including even the ox-eyed contralto, when, at the close of the performance, the 'Diva' insisted upon going to the green-room and weeping her congratulations upon the neck of the exhausted prima donna.

That night, also, after a merry supper, I, stammering, protesting, and humbly acknowledging that neither credit nor cash was due to me, was forced by the grimly smiling chief to accept handsome fees, both from the somewhat subdued Signorina Lucia della Casa and from the jubilant Hopkins.

'I'll give you one good reason afterwards,' the old man told me, 'for taking a fee while you can get it.' And the reason he gave me the next day was as follows:

'You see, my dear boy, you had a lot of trouble and responsibility. Well, you're a poor man, and that hussy's rolling in gold, and so's Hopkins. It serves them both right, and they got off cheap. Besides, there's another reason.'

'What's that, sir?'

'Well, you see, that silly girl was my patient before, when she came here, and, since you won't give her lying certificates, I fancy she'll come to me again when she wants advice. I don't suppose that I ought to refuse her, do you?'

I didn't.

